ARNHEM LAND EXPEDITION

000

1. *Art, Myth and Symbolism*
by Charles P. Mountford

Three more volumes to follow:
2. Anthropology and Nutrition
3. Botany and Plant Ecology
4. Natural History

[P. ii]
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RECORDS
OF THE AMERICAN-AUSTRALIAN SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION TO
ARNHEM LAND

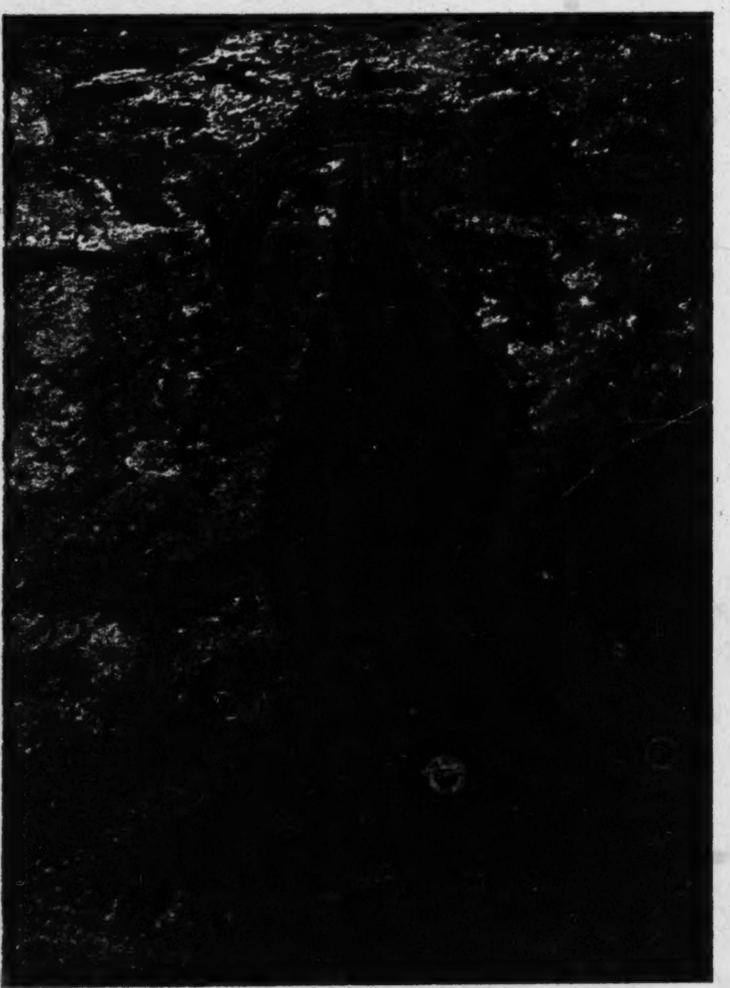
1
Art, Myth and Symbolism

by

CHARLES P. MOUNTFORD

[Title Page]

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY PRESS



Cave painting, Inagurdurwil
A pied goose

[facing p. iii]

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FOREWORD

It is with pleasure that I write the Foreword to this, the first of a series of 000 volumes describing the scientific results of the 1948 Arnhem Land Expedition. Thus, the hopes for the eventual publication of the expedition's findings, expressed seven years ago by the Hon. Arthur A. Calwell in the Preface, are being realised.

The Arnhem Land Expedition, which the foresight of Mr Calwell, then 122 Minister of State for Information, made possible, was a joint project of the National Geographic Society of America, the Commonwealth Government of Australia and the Smithsonian Institution of the United States of America. It was planned, organized and led by Mr Charles P. Mountford, then a member of the staff of the Department of Information and later an officer of my Department, with Mr Frank Setzler, of the United States, as deputy leader.

Until the expedition went into the field in early 1948, Arnhem Land was one 000 of the least known parts of the Australian continent. It is no longer so. As this volume and those which will follow it will show, the expedition made important findings in the fields of aboriginal art and mythology, ethnology, archaeology, nutrition and health, botany and zoology.

In addition to advancing the frontiers of world knowledge in all these fields, the expedition consolidated and extended the co-operation and mutual respect already existing between academic circles in the United States of America and Australia.

W. S. Kent Hughes
Minister of State for the Interior

Canberra, A.C.T.
December 1955

PREFACE

WHAT HISTORY will come in time to know as the 1948 Arnhem Land Expedition has recently concluded.

It was my privilege to have been associated with the expedition from the inception of the idea in 1945 to the return of the scientists from the remoteness of Arnhem Land on 17 November last, after nine months of intensive research.

The formation of a joint Australian-American expedition to Arnhem Land was suggested to me by Mr Charles P. Mountford, a valued senior officer of my Department. Recognizing the important contribution to scientific knowledge that could be made by the joint endeavours of distinguished American and Australian scientists operating in one of the least known parts of the earth's surface, I endorsed the plan which Mr Mountford and his American associates have now translated into an accomplished fact. It was the largest expedition in Australian history dealing with medical, nutritional, ethnological and natural history research.

Years must elapse before the findings of the scientists are finally proven and collated but I now express the hope that eventually the work of the expedition in its various fields of research will be published for the enrichment of scientific knowledge the world over.

The Australian poet, Bernard O'Dowd, described this continent of ours as 'Last sea-thing dredged by sailor Time from Space'. It is my hope that the Arnhem Land Expedition will be but one of many in which scientists of the United States and Australia will cooperate to uncover more secrets from this island continent.

ARTHUR A. CALWELL
Minister of State for Information

Canberra, A.C.T.
December 1948

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INTRODUCTION

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY-Smithsonian Institution-Commonwealth of Australia Expedition to Arnhem Land was planned as a result of negotiations between representatives of the Australian Government and the National Geographic Society of Washington, U.S.A. 121 122

The attention of the Society's officials had been drawn to the possibilities of research in the remote parts of Australia by two coloured films on aboriginal life, 'Tjurunga' and 'Walkabout', which had been made by Mr Charles P. Mountford whilst he was leader of the 1940 and 1942 Adelaide University anthropological expeditions to Central Australia. These films attracted the attention of the Director-General of Information, who decided to send Mr Mountford on a lecture tour to the U.S.A., as part of the Australian overseas information programme.

During the tour, the largest and most enthusiastic audience was four thousand members of the National Geographic Society, in the Constitution Hall, Washington. The interest of the Research Committee of the National Geographic Society stimulated Mr Mountford to submit a proposal for a scientific research expedition to Arnhem Land. To this proposal the National Geographic Society agreed, appointed Mr Mountford as leader, and after negotiations between the Australian Minister at Washington, Sir Frederic Eggleston, and the Minister for Information, the Hon. A. A. Calwell, the Commonwealth Government offered to make Mr Mountford's services available and to provide transport for the expedition.

The original expedition party suggested by the National Geographic Society was to have been small, an American biologist from the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, and Mr Mountford, to study the various phases of aboriginal life.

This was, however, further considered by the Australian Government. Realizing that such an expedition afforded a great opportunity both to better the good relations between Australia and the United States of America, and to investigate one of the least known parts of Australia, the Minister for Information arranged for the party to be much more comprehensive, consisting of both American and Australian naturalists and ethnologists.

Arnhem Land[1] was chosen because, being an almost unknown country, there had been very little research into its natural history and ethnology; for it is a curious fact that although the Gulf of Carpentaria and Arnhem Land were the first parts of Australia to be discovered, they are still the least known parts of the Australian continent. 121

As early as 1606 Willem Janszoon, in the yacht *Duyfken*, had sailed down the east coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria, turning back at Cape Keerweer, without realizing he had discovered the largest unexplored land mass in the world. 121 175

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[1] Map, Fig. 1.

[p. viii is blank]

INTRODUCTION

121 175 Seventeen years later Jan Carstensz, with his two ships *Pera* and *Arnhem*, sailed along the shores of Arnhem Land. It is from the name of the latter vessel that the region takes its name. In 1644, Tasman mapped part of the coastline and discovered Groote Eylandt (Large Island), on which we were to establish our first base camp. Between 1649 and 1803, when Flinders surveyed the coastline of the Gulf of Carpentaria, no Europeans sailed in those waters.[2] And since Flinders' departure, although means of transport have improved immeasurably, Arnhem Land has remained practically unknown.

000 Since the expedition, however, the resulting publicity, its films, and what is already known about its scientific results, have increased the interest in the ethnology and the natural history of this remote part of Australia.

W. A. McLaren
Secretary
Department of the Interior

Canberra, A.C.T.
December, 1955

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[2] It is possible that the *Baijini* people were an isolated group of Europeans (Dutch or Portuguese) who once visited Port Bradshaw. See p. 334.

MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION[2]

LEADER, ETHNOLOGIST AND FILM DIRECTOR: Charles P. Mountford, O.B.E., F.F.A.A.A., F.R.A.I., F.R.G.S.
Honorary Associate Curator in Ethnology, South Australian Museum

DEPUTY LEADER AND ARCHAEOLOGIST: Frank M. Setzler, PH.D.
Head Curator, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution

ORNITHOLOGIST: Herbert G. Deignan, B.A.
Associate Curator of Birds, Smithsonian Institution

MAMMALOGIST: David H. Johnson, PH.D.
Curator of Mammals, Smithsonian Institution

ICHTHYOLOGIST: Robert R. Miller, PH.D.
Associate Curator of Fishes, Smithsonian Institution

BOTANIST: Raymond L. Specht, PH.D.
Lecturer, Department of Botany, University of Adelaide

ANTHROPOLOGIST: Frederick D. McCarthy, DIP.ANTHROP.
Department of Anthropology, Australian Museum, Sydney

PHOTOGRAPHER AND STAFF WRITER: Harrison Howell Walker
National Geographic Society, Washington

HONORARY SECRETARY: Bessie I. Mountford

GUIDE AND LIAISON OFFICER: William E. Harney

CINE-PHOTOGRAPHER: Peter Bassett-Smith

TRANSPORT OFFICER: Keith Cordon

COOK AND HONORARY ENTOMOLOGIST: John E. Bray; COOK from 12 August 1948: Reginald Hollow

The Institute of Anatomy, Canberra, also attached a nutritional unit to the expedition to study aboriginal health and food. Its members were:

MEDICAL OFFICER: Brian Billington, M.B., B.S.

NUTRITIONIST: Margaret McArthur, M.SC.

BIOCHEMIST: Kelvin Hodges, B.SC.

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[2] Pl. 1A.

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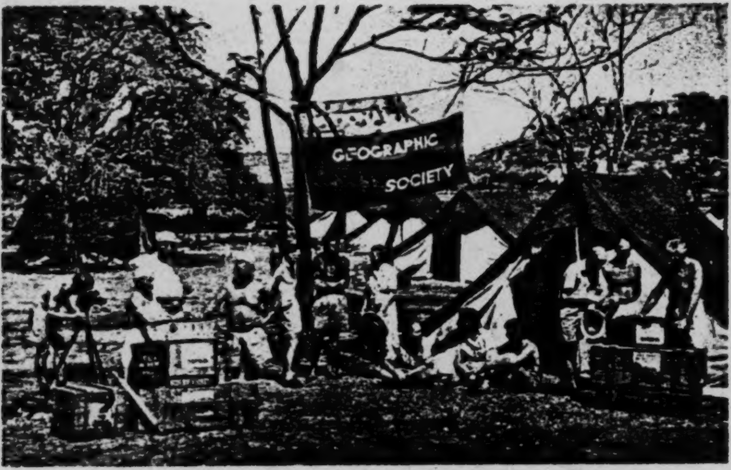

PLATE 1A. Expedition party at Oenpelli

Reading from left: Peter Bassett-Smith, Reginald Hollow, David Johnson, William E. Harney, Frederick D. McCarthy, Herbert E. Deignan, Bessie I. Mountford, Brian Billington, Margaret McArthur, Kelvin Hodges, Charles P. Mountford, John E. Bray, Frank M. Setzler.
Absent: Raymond Specht and Robert Miller.

PLATE 1B. Unbalanja Hill from the expedition camp

Photographs by Howell Walker

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I CANNOT ACKNOWLEDGE separately all who helped me so generously on the Arnhem Land expedition, they are so many. But I can offer them my sincere thanks.

It was Dr Gilbert Grosvenor, President of the National Geographic Society, Dr Alexander Wetmore, then Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, and Mr Arthur Calwell, then Australian Minister for Information, whose support and help made the expedition such an undoubted success. To these gentlemen I am especially thankful.

I am grateful, also, to the members of the party for their loyalty, forbearance and good fellowship, and to my wife who, in a purely honorary capacity and under considerable hardships, carried out the multitudinous duties of secretary and treasurer. Without her unstinted help I could not have brought the expedition to such a successful conclusion.

And last, but by no means least, my thanks are offered to Mrs J. A. Truman, who not only assisted in the preparation of the manuscript, but prepared many of the illustrations, and to Miss B. M. Ramsden for her patient and careful checking of the manuscript and proofs.

C.P.M.

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THE STORY OF THE EXPEDITION

IN 1946, when planning began for the expedition to enter Arnhem Land early in 1947, full co-operation came from many quarters. The National Geographic Society and the Smithsonian Institution of Washington offered to make members of their staffs available; the Minister for Information undertook to meet all travel and transport costs; the Minister for Air offered air transport, wherever it was possible; the Minister for the Army allowed the expedition to draw on Army stores for food and equipment; the Minister for Health arranged for a unit of three scientists from the Institute of Anatomy to join the expedition, their object being to study aboriginal health and nutrition; the Minister for the Interior, who placed his Northern Territory organization at our disposal, later helped us greatly, assisting in the transport arrangements and the forwarding of mails and supplies; and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research released a navigator and engineer to man the 66-foot Army trawler which had been promised from the Disposals Commission. With so much co-operation and help, considerable progress was made toward completing the arrangements for the expedition by the end of 1946. The Australian authorities, however, considering that a postponement of a year would allow time for a better arrangement of staff and transport, suggested such a course to the National Geographic Society and the Smithsonian Institution of Washington. Both agreed to the postponement. 122

By the beginning of 1948 the final party had been selected and the arrangements for transport and supplies completed, except for the boat, the non-provision of which was the sole cause of the delays, misfortunes and disorganization that beset our movements. The first contingent of the American party, Dr David Johnson and Dr Robert Miller, from the Smithsonian Institution, and Mr Howell Walker, from the National Geographic Society, reached Sydney by air on 21 February. Two days later Mr Frank Setzler and Mr Herbert Deignan, both from the Smithsonian Institution, arrived in Brisbane by boat. 600

Their arrival completed the scientific party, which consisted of Frank Setzler, deputy leader and archaeologist; Robert Miller, ichthyologist; Herbert Deignan, ornithologist; Howell Walker, staff photographer and writer; Brian Billington, medical officer; Miss Margaret McArthur, nutritionist; Kelvin Hodges, biochemist; Raymond Specht, botanist, from the University of Adelaide; Frederick McCarthy, anthropologist, Australian Museum, Sydney; and myself as leader, ethnologist specializing on aboriginal art, and film director.

Other members of the party were: Mrs Bessie Mountford, honorary secretary; Peter Bassett-Smith, cine-photographer and wireless operator; Keith Cordon, transport officer; John Bray, cook and honorary entomologist. No previous scientific expedition in Australia had covered so many interlocking fields of natural history, medical science and ethnology.

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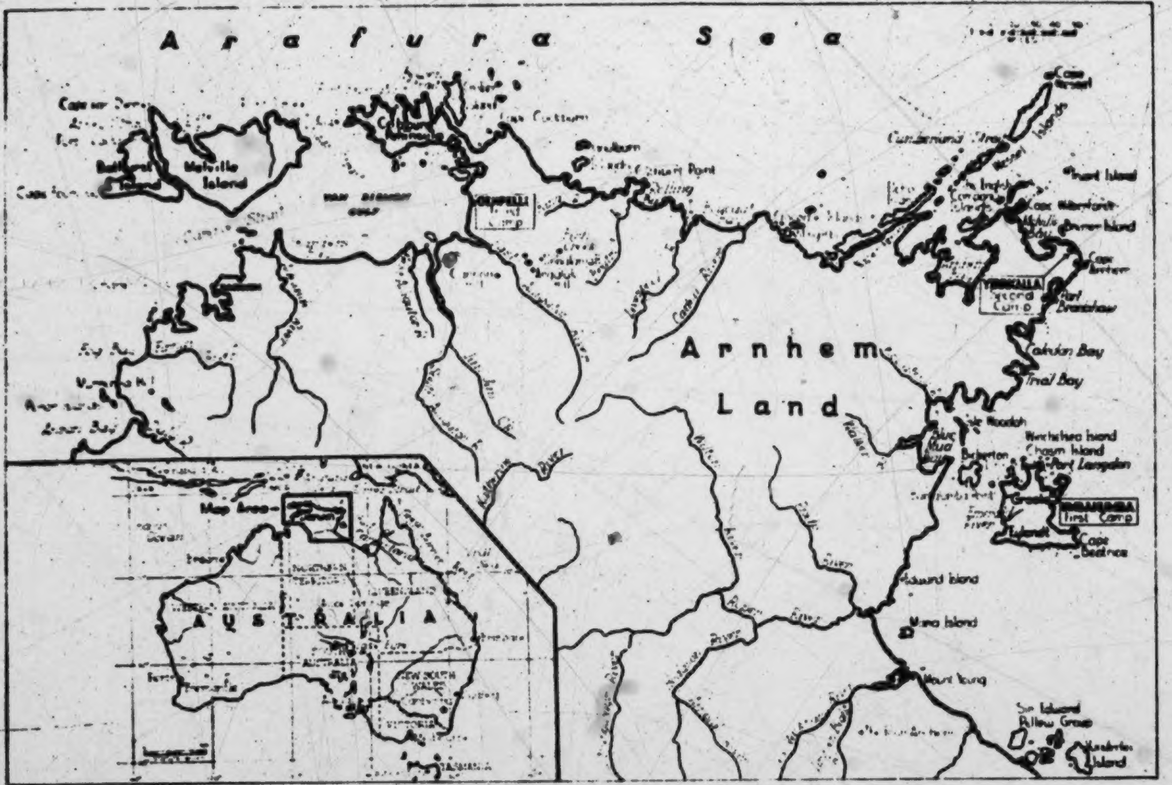
A r a f u r a S e a
Melville Island
Bathurst Island
Cape Cotton
Van Diemen Gulf
OENPELLI First Camp
Arnhem Land
Wessel Islands
Cape Wessel
Cape Wilberforce
Bremer Island
Cape Arnhem
YIRRKALLA Second Camp
Port Bradshaw
Caledon Bay
Trial Bay
Blue Mud Bay
Bickerton
Woodah Island
Chasm Island
Port Langdon
Groote Eylandt
UMBAKUMBA First Camp
Cape Beatrice
Maria Island
Mount Young
Sir Edward Pellew Group
Vanderlin Island
Map Area
AUSTRALIA
NEW SOUTH WALES
VICTORIA

Fig. 1. Arnhem Land, showing expedition camps

THE STORY OF THE EXPEDITION

After being entertained at vice-regal, civic and academic receptions in the capital cities, in a manner seldom accorded a scientific party, members assembled in Adelaide during the second week in March. On the morning of 18 March, all left for Darwin, over two thousand miles away, in a Royal Australian Air Force plane and well before sunset we reached our destination. The delivery of heavy equipment, which had been sent overland, delayed the party for ten days in Darwin. The naturalists, however, were fully employed, for the sea coast and jungles adjacent to the camp were particularly rich in fauna and flora. 122 121

It was planned to establish four research camps and to stay in the field from March until November, leaving before the oncoming wet season would hamper, if not prevent, our movements. Each camp would be situated in different topographical conditions, conditions which not only determined the distribution of the fauna and flora, but also influenced the aboriginal way of life.[4] 121

The camps were to be:

(a) Groote Eylandt. This was an island camp, with a somewhat stony hinterland and a distinctive aboriginal culture.

(b) Roper River. A fresh-water river and swamp environment and an aboriginal way of life which depends largely on river and fishing techniques.

(c) Yirrkalla. Situated on the sea coast in north-eastern Arnhem Land, with fresh-water swamps and eucalyptus forests in the rear. The culture of the aborigines has been somewhat influenced by Macassan fishermen who, until about forty years ago, regularly visited those parts. [177]

(d) Oenpelli. On the western escarpment of the Arnhem Land plateau. This camp has a particularly wide range of topographical conditions, each with its own distinctive fauna and flora. To the east is the rugged Arnhem Land plateau, in which there are many aboriginal cave shelters. At the base are lines of fresh-water lagoons, the home of a multitude of water-birds and fish and, to the west, the widespreading flood-plains of the Alligator Rivers.

By 1 April the heavy camp equipment and supplies had reached Darwin and the party was ready to move to our first camp at Groote Eylandt. However, although the Royal Australian Air Force was able to fly us to Groote Eylandt in Catalina flying-boats, it did not have planes capable of transporting our forty-seven tons of food, camp gear and scientific equipment. Providentially (at least, so it seemed at the time) the owner-skipper of a 200-ton, flat-bottomed wooden barge called the *Phoenix*, which had been commissioned to bring dismantled material to Darwin from an old flying-boat base at Groote Eylandt, offered to carry the supplies on the outward journey, promising to reach there within fourteen days of our departure.

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[4] Map, Fig. 1.

THE STORY OF THE EXPEDITION

122 As the Catalina, by making two journeys, could take the party, a skeleton camp, and twenty-one days' supply of food to Groote Eylandt, I arranged for one group to leave on 3 April and the second to leave two days later. But heavy storms and monsoonal rains so reduced visibility that the flight on 3 April was impossible. Next morning we set out, reaching Little Lagoon, a small, almost land-locked harbour on the north of Groote Eylandt, about midday. We established camp at Umbakumba, a native settlement under the control of Fred Gray, and on 6 April were able to welcome the remainder of the party with the exception of David Johnson, Herbert Deignan and Howell Walker, who were travelling on the *Phœnix*, the two naturalists to collect over a wider area, and the latter to gain local colour and photographs for his *National Geographic* articles.

The early days of our camp at Groote Eylandt were marred by a series of misfortunes, all associated with communication and water transport. When Peter Bassett-Smith installed his short-wave set, he found that the valves had been damaged and the set would not function. This meant that we had no communication with the outside world, except through a distant mission station, and then only with the aid of native runners.

By 11 April food was getting low and, as we were unable to get news of the *Phœnix*, I decided to walk to the mission station. There, by the aid of the radio, I could find out if the *Phœnix* had left on time and, if not, could arrange for a further supply of food to be sent out by air. We boarded Fred Gray's launch, to cover part of the journey by sea, but a particularly heavy storm drove us into shelter and we returned to camp four hours later, with nothing accomplished. Early next morning Fred Rose, a visitor, Gordon Sweeney, a patrol officer of the Native Affairs Branch, and I, with a number of aboriginal men, set out to walk to the mission station on the Angoroko River, thirty-eight miles distant. It had been raining for days. Five inches had fallen on the day our boat was driven into shelter and, as it turned out, three inches on the day we walked. The track was an old Army road, which for most of the way had been turned into a water-course by continuous rains, the streams were filled to overflowing, and the swamps, sometimes waist-deep, extended for miles.

When at 10.30 p.m. we completed that strenuous journey, we found, to our chagrin, that the Angoroko River was too heavily flooded for us, in our exhausted condition, to cross. So after all the strenuous effort we had to spend the night, sleeping in the mud around tiny smouldering fires, on the *wrong* side of the river. Even when, next morning, we did succeed in reaching the opposite bank, the heavy static prevented wireless communication until the evening. When I learned that heavy weather had kept the *Phœnix* at Darwin I contacted the Army and Air Force, who quickly co-operated, and before I was able to return to Umbakumba a Catalina flying-boat had delivered food to the expedition camp, and, for the time being, our troubles were over.

But not for long. On 5 May Bassett-Smith, who had by then succeeded in getting his wireless set to work as a receiver, intercepted a message from Johnson, saying that the barge *Phoenix* was on a reef in Boucaut Bay,[5] but that the staff and supplies were safe. Knowing that a spell of rough weather would break up the ancient barge I arranged with Fred Gray to take us to the wreck, about three hundred miles distant, in his little 33-foot launch, and, if necessary, bring back the members of our party with what scientific equipment we could salvage.

For five days our little craft battled against heavy seas to reach the barge. When we arrived at Milingimbi, in the Crocodile Islands, we saw, to our great relief, the *Phoenix* unloading cargo with her flat bottom resting on the mud.[6] She had floated off the reef on the high tide of the previous day. Finding our supplies were safe and the staff well, we loaded up some of the scientific instruments and equipment (we were not short of food in the main camp) and, taking Deignan with us, set out for Umbakumba. It took six days to return to Groote Eylandt, the weather conditions being even worse than on the outward journey, and on 21 May, six days after our arrival and five weeks after her scheduled time, the *Phoenix* entered Little Lagoon with the supplies for which we had waited so long.

With all the party together and ample supplies, work started in earnest. Billington and Hodges, having finished their medical examination of the aborigines at Umbakumba, moved to the mission station on the Angoroko River; Miss McArthur, who had already completed one nutritional camp at Hemple Bay, established another at Bickerton Island, accompanied by Specht, the botanist, and Howard Coates, an officer of the Native Affairs Branch; while Setzler and McCarthy spent a few days at Winchelsea Island, excavating Malay graves. Later, McCarthy examined cave paintings within the area. In general, the naturalists did most of their collecting around the main camp.

My duties as leader kept me, for most of the time, in the main camp. I was able, however, to make a brief stay at Bickerton Island, visit totemic places along the west coast of Groote Eylandt and, with McCarthy and others, examine the cave paintings at Chasm Island which had been discovered by Flinders in 1803. I was also able to view a totemic ceremony of which, previously, we had little knowledge.

The late arrival of the *Phoenix* necessitated the abandonment of the Roper River camp. But the added length of stay at Groote Eylandt was advantageous, because it allowed members of the party to increase their knowledge and natural history collections of this interesting island environment.

After fourteen weeks at Groote Eylandt a Catalina flying-boat and a mission launch moved the party to Yirrkalla. This was by far the most pleasant of all our camps. We pitched our tents on the crown of a sandhill carpeted with a mat of thick grass, a welcome change after the soft sand of Umbakumba. Before us was an open curving beach, on which the waves thundered day and night, and

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5. Pl. 2A. 6. Pl. 2B.

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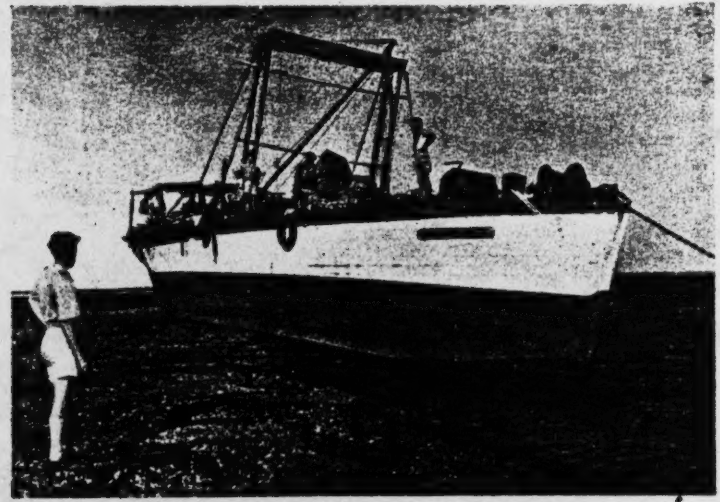

Plate 2A. *Phoenix* on a reef at Boucaut Bay

Plate 2B. *Phoenix* unloading at Milingimbi

Photographs by Howell Walker

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 O117 Murngin O117

behind us a fresh-water swamp, shaded by large trees, fringed with luxuriant grasses and intersected with a stream of clear water. The weather, too, was at its best. The mists of morning gave way to warm dry days, while the nights were chilly and refreshing. As we sat at meals we could look across the tumbling waters and watch the aboriginal children at play, shooting the breakers in their small canoes, spearing fish, or drawing pictures in the glistening sands. 122 [33] [32] [857]

The day after reaching Yirrkalla, we received a pleasant surprise in the form of a visit from the American Consul for South Australia, Mr E. Seibert, who had made the journey to see his American colleagues; the Administrator for the Northern Territory, Mr A. R. Driver; and the Director-General of Information, Mr Kevin Murphy.

The only change of staff happened at Yirrkalla. Gordon, the transport officer, returned to Adelaide because of sickness in his family. Bray became transport officer and the position as cook was filled by Reginald Hollow.

We had no sooner settled in our camp than the Northern Territory patrol launch *Kuru* visited us. With it came W. E. Harney to act as guide to the expedition. Harney's knowledge of Arnhem Land, especially of the Gulf of Carpentaria, is extensive; of the aboriginal people, deep and understanding; and of the fauna and flora, considerable. As a story-teller and singer, Harney entertained us, individually and collectively, for hours with his tales of cattle thieves, droving and journeys with the aborigines. Merely stopping to pick up Miss McArthur, Miller, Setzler, McCarthy and Harney, the *Kuru* continued her journey to Port Bradshaw, where Setzler dug out more Malay graves, Miller caught fish by line, poison and net, and McCarthy and Harney examined a small group of cave paintings at Jelangbara. Miss McArthur had asked to be allowed to establish a nutrition camp, with no other companions but her two aboriginal interpreters, a man and his wife, claiming that she could get a truer picture of the aborigines in their natural environment if she were by herself.

On the return of the party from Port Bradshaw, Setzler and McCarthy flew to Milingimbi to carry out archaeological research, whilst the remainder of the scientists concentrated on their own special interests near the base camp. During this time, the botanist, mammalogist, ornithologist, and particularly the ichthyologist added greatly to their collections. Billington and Hodges set up their nutrition laboratory in the mission hospital, a much more comfortable place for work than Umbakumba. Bassett-Smith and I photographed many aspects of aboriginal life on colour cine film. The aboriginal men also produced for me many unusual bark paintings as well as carved and painted figures.

But again sea transport troubles arose. During the period of the Yirrkalla camp I had flown into Darwin and arranged with some Chinese merchants to send their forty-ton landing barge *Triumph* to Yirrkalla, load all the gear and, with members of the party aboard, take the barge around the north coast and up the East Alligator River to our next camp at Oenpelli, a journey of about six hundred miles. Although the journey would not have been comfortable, this move would have been much simpler than by any other means. But a few days before the barge was due to set out from Darwin its engines failed, leaving us to reach Oenpelli as best we could. Again the Air Force came to our rescue and, on 9 September, moved most of our supplies and party to Darwin, about two months after we had landed at Yirrkalla.

Two of the party, Johnson and Bassett-Smith, travelled with the remainder of our supplies in the mission lugger *Victory*. Johnson disembarked at Cape Don to collect mammals, Bassett-Smith continuing the journey to Oenpelli. By 20 September the remainder of the party had reached Oenpelli and were ready to start work.

In selecting Oenpelli I had estimated that it would be the most spectacular, the most productive and, at the same time, the most uncomfortable of our research camps; all these expectations were fulfilled.

Looking from our tent doors, we could see a placid lagoon, dotted with water-lilies and numberless birds and fringed with green rushes; on the distant shore was the eucalyptus forest; beyond that the brown buffalo-grass flood plain, and behind that, again, the high escarpment of the rugged Arnhem Land plateau, blue with the haze of distance.

Oenpelli offered a varied field for all: the naturalists, the anthropologists and the photographers.[7] It has three distinct physical environments, each rich in its own flora and fauna; the open savannah woodlands, the black soil flood plains of the Alligator Rivers, and the forbidding plateau country in the caves of which we were to find relics of early man and innumerable aboriginal paintings.

But in physical comfort Oenpelli had little to recommend it. Although the early mornings and late evenings were sometimes pleasant, the hours of daylight were the reverse. The widespreading plains and rocky hillsides reflected the burning heat of the sun, and the hot winds and smoke from the grass-fires lit by the aborigines[8] added to the discomfort. Every day, the temperature within the tents rose to over 100° F., and on several occasions reached 108° F. Nor were the nights much better, for when writing up our notes or preparing the specimens gathered during the day, the mosquitoes attacked us and myriads of moths, beetles and other flying things crawled into our eyes and became entangled in our hair and clothing.

Although everyone found the conditions somewhat trying, I think that Billington and Hodges worked under the greatest disadvantages. Their laboratory consisted of two Army tents, set end to end in a dusty paddock. The high temperature and the dust, where cleanliness is so important, were a continuous trial. Yet these two kept going without complaints and finished their allotted task.

Setzler and McCarthy carried out a series of archaeological excavations in the cave floors at Unbalanja Hill,[9] about a mile west of the main camp, and working conditions there were also unpleasant. The temperature among the rocks was high, the humidity oppressive and the dust from the sieves so dense that it was sometimes difficult to see the archaeologists.

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[7] Pl. 1A.

[8] At the end of the dry season, the aborigines burn the grass so that they can travel more easily.

[9] Pl. 1B.

After a while McCarthy left and went to Fish Creek with Bray and Miss McArthur, leaving Setzler to carry on with only the help of two aborigines. At Fish Creek Miss McArthur studied the diet and food habits of an aboriginal group, and McCarthy noted their methods of food-gathering; Bray added many insects to his entomological collection.

The reduced size of the lagoons at the end of the dry season had concentrated the fish. Miller declared that they were the richest waters in which he had collected. He netted his specimens in both the fresh-water lagoon and the tidal East Alligator River.

For the ornithologist there were birds everywhere, on the water, in the grass, among the trees and the tumbled rocks of the plateau. Oenpelli was a prolific field for Deignan. For the botanist, too, the conditions were equally good and Specht's collection grew by leaps and bounds. Bassett-Smith and I concentrated on making a coloured film on the varied bird and plant life of the lagoons. And in the caves of the rugged plateau I found extensive galleries of unusual cave paintings.

On 19 October, just as the party was farewelling Miller on the eve of his departure for U.S.A., Johnson reached Oenpelli after walking 160 miles from Cape Don, without a native to guide him. He had been successful in making a collection of mammals which can be compared with that made by the naturalist Gilbert over a hundred years ago.

But, even to the end, transport troubles followed us. The Chinese merchants, having repaired the landing barge *Triumph*, had arranged to send it up the East Alligator River to Oenpelli, load our supplies and, with the party aboard, transport us to Darwin. We had partly dismantled our camp, when the news came through by wireless that a widespread measles epidemic had broken out in the Darwin area and the movement of all aborigines was prohibited. As the barge was manned largely by an aboriginal crew, that meant the *Triumph* could not leave Darwin. It seemed as if we might have to wait, in a partly dismantled camp, for an indefinite time, but after many negotiations I was able to arrange for Harney and myself to be flown into Darwin to form part of the crew. The final difficulty was overcome when Harry Moss, the pilot of the little plane that carried us to Darwin, generously offered to act as our pilot along the treacherous East Alligator River.

We left Darwin at midnight, and two days later, on 1 November, reached the Oenpelli landing. Most of that night, and all the next day, we worked incessantly transferring the supplies by motor from our camp, several miles inland, to the river bank. Then, as the brief tide (we were seventy miles from the sea) lifted the barge from the muddy bottom, everyone, expedition members and aborigines alike, rushed the goods on board hoping to get away before the tide went out.

122 But a tangled anchor rope delayed us and we were left stranded in the mud for another twelve hours. By next sunrise, however, we were on our way down the river and by sunset, two days later, we were berthed at the Darwin jetty. The field work of the expedition was over.

000 The results of the expedition could hardly have been richer, both from the standpoint of human companionship and scientific results. I cannot speak too highly of the good fellowship that existed between members of the party during the eight months we were together, a good fellowship not always present on expeditions where members have been together for extended periods. The gross results of the collections, too, were impressive: 13,500 plant specimens, 30,000 fish, 850 birds, 460 animals, several thousand aboriginal implements and weapons, together with photographs and drawings of a large number of cave paintings from Chasm Island, Groote Eylandt and Oenpelli. There was also a collection of several hundred aboriginal bark paintings and two hundred string figures. In addition to the physical collections of natural history and ethnological specimens, each scientist had written extensive field notes as a basis for his scientific papers. There were also many hundreds of monochrome and coloured photographs as well as several miles of colour film on aboriginal life and natural history.

113 Two articles on the expedition have been published in the *National Geographic Magazine*: 'Cruise to Stone Age Arnhem Land'[10] by Howell Walker and 'Exploring Stone Age Arnhem Land'[11] by myself. Four coloured cine films have also been completed, with Bassett-Smith as photographer and myself as director: 'Arnhem Land', a survey of the natural history and ethnology of that region; 'Aborigines of the Sea Coast', dealing with native life at Yirrkalla; 'Birds and Billabongs', picturing the birds and the water-lilies of Oenpelli lagoons; and 'The Arawaltja Ceremony' of Groote Eylandt.

000 This volume is the first of a series which will describe the scientific results of the Arnhem Land Expedition. General subjects which will be published in the succeeding volumes are: Ethnology, archaeology, ornithology, mammalogy, hepherology, conchology, botany, ichthyology.

The ethnological and natural history specimens collected on the expedition will, when the research work on them is completed, be distributed between the Australian and American institutions, with the exception of the botanical collection. A duplicated collection has already been presented to the major herbaria in Australia; to the Kew Gardens, London; to the Arnold Herbarium, Harvard University, Boston; to the United States National Herbarium, Washington; and to the Rijksherbarium, Leiden, Netherlands.

Many of the cave paintings discovered at Oenpelli, and bark paintings collected at Groote Eylandt, Yirrkalla and Oenpelli, have been reproduced in colour by UNESCO in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*.

C.P.M.

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[10] Walker (1949), pp. 117-30.

[11] Mountford (1949), pp. 745-82.

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PART ONE

ABORIGINAL ART OF AUSTRALIA

[P.1]

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

TASMANIANS OI 19

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ABORIGINAL ART OF AUSTRALIA

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THE BASIC ART of the Australian aborigines consists of abstract geometric designs, which cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist who produced them. This art form covers the greater part of the continent. In three areas—the Hawkesbury River basin, with Sydney as a centre, north-western Australia and Arnhem Land—this simple form has been overlaid by a more advanced naturalistic art in which identifiable paintings of animals, birds, fish, reptiles and human beings predominate. 531 M 532* 171

For many years it was thought that the Tasmanian aborigines had no form of artistic expression. Recently, however, discoveries of rock engravings have been made in three different localities—Mount Cameron West, Devonport and Trial Harbour.[1] Those at Mount Cameron West were cut into a soft calcareous limestone; but those at Devonport and Trial Harbour are in much harder materials, the former in diabase, the latter in granite. The designs, which are made up of circles, concentric circles and straight lines, are similar to those the aborigines carved in the rocks on some parts of the mainland. The Tasmanians also painted designs on sheets of bark.[2] M 532* 171 T 532 171

Victoria and southern New South Wales are poor in examples of aboriginal art. No rock engravings have been found in Victoria, and only four localities of cave paintings are known. Three of these are in the western part of the state and the fourth in the Lake Tyers area of Gippsland.[3] Though there is a paucity of cave paintings, however, the engravings made by the aborigines on their shields and spear-throwers indicate that they possessed an unusual ability for decorative design. The Victorians, like the Tasmanians, also painted designs on the walls of their bark shelters.[4] M 532* 171

The dominant art in north-eastern South Australia and western New South Wales is that of the rock engravings, of which many thousands have been discovered.[5] Although the designs are similar to those of the Tasmanians, the technique of producing them was different. Whereas the Tasmanian engravings appear to have been cut or pounded with a boulder, those in South Australia were made by striking the surface of the rock with a sharp-cornered pebble, producing a series of pits, or indentations. In some instances the subject is only outlined, in others the whole design is removed to the depth of a few millimetres. There are a few rock engravings in the soft Miocene limestone which forms the banks of the River Murray.[6] These engravings resemble those at Mount Cameron

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1. Luckman (1950), p. 25.
2. Péron (1807), Pl. 15; Bunce (1857), pp. 49-50.
3. Davidson (1936), p. 77.
4. Smyth (1878), vol. 1, p. 292.
5. Mountford (1935), pp. 207-13.
6. Sheard (1927), pp. 137-40.

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*532 171 West in Tasmania, both in appearance and design.[7] It is possible that the soft rock in both places has allowed the use of similar techniques. In the caves of the River Murray, and in the ranges of South Australia and western New South Wales, are scattered groups of cave paintings.[8] Although in these caves there are many naturalistic figures, the curvilinear abstract forms, similar to those of the rock engravings, are present in equal numbers.

New South Wales has three distinct art forms within its boundaries, rock engravings and cave paintings on the western section, carved trees, commonest in central New South Wales, and rock engravings of the Hawkesbury River basin.

The carved trees extend over a large part of New South Wales and southern Queensland, extending from the Shoalhaven River in the south, to the Tweed River in Queensland, and westward as far as Bourke, on the River Darling.[9] While we know nothing of the purpose of the forms of art already mentioned, we do know, from the writings of early settlers, that these carved trees were used for two purposes. Some were associated with the *bora* (initiation) ceremony, and others with the burial rituals. The living trees were carved with designs, sometimes as long as nine feet, made up of an interesting combination of diamonds, circles, spirals, and other curvilinear patterns; the human figure was seldom used. The labour of cutting these complex designs into the large number of tree-trunks required for a *bora* ground must have been considerable. Black[10] records that there are still over eighty carved trees standing at the Bannaway *bora* ground on the Barwon River.

The aborigines of the Hawkesbury River basin developed an art form which consisted largely of huge outline engravings[11] of human beings, fish, animals, birds and reptiles cut in the soft sandstone. The sea-creatures predominate (as is to be expected on a sea-coast), some of them reaching a length of sixty feet, and there are numerous examples of kangaroos up to twenty-two feet, human beings fifteen feet, and emus thirteen feet long. These large engravings were cut in the soft sandstone either with a sharp-pointed stone tool, or by drilling a series of holes, about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, along the outline of the design, after which the intervening sections were broken or rubbed down. As with the rock engravings of Tasmania and South Australia, and the designs on the carved trees of New South Wales, we have no evidence from the aborigines themselves either of the meanings of these engraved figures, or of the mythology associated with them. The artists who produced these remarkable engravings, and the aborigines who knew their meanings, died many years before we became sufficiently interested to inquire about their art.[12]

[7] Luckman (1950). Pl. 1-8.

[8] Black (1943).

[9] Etheridge, Junr. (1918), Pl. 39; Black (1941), p. 25.

[10] Black (1941), p. 31.

[11] Campbell (1899).

[114] [12] In recent years, some workers are placing their own interpretations on the more abstract of these figures. As such interpretations could not have been obtained directly from the aboriginal who produced them, nor from any aboriginal who has seen them produced, and as there are no references in early literature about the meaning of these figures, as given by aboriginal artists, such interpretations should be accepted with considerable reserve.

ABORIGINAL ART OF AUSTRALIA

Little research has been carried out on the primitive art of Queensland, but, as far as we know, that state appears to be poor in examples of either the cave or rock engraving art. In a few widely separated places rock engravings have been found, resembling those of South Australia both in technique and design.[13] The cave paintings in Blackall, Princess Charlotte Bay,[14] and Carnarvon Ranges, too, like those further south, are made up of both abstract and naturalistic figures. It is in the decorating of his weapons and implements, particularly of his large fighting shields, boomerangs, and spear-throwers that the Queensland aboriginal has excelled.[15] The shields are often up to three feet in length, and on their surface the aboriginal artist painted pleasing geometric, seldom naturalistic, designs, in soft yellows, reds, black and white, symbolic of one of the many mythical ancestors of the tribe.

Over the parts of Australia with which we have already dealt, the aborigines have either died out or discontinued their rich ceremonial life. Because of this, it is seldom possible to find out the meanings of the designs that they painted in caves, carved on tree trunks, or engraved on rock surfaces.

However, the aboriginal culture is still intact in central and northern Australia, and we were able to ask the artists themselves the meanings of the designs they were producing. We found, whether dealing with the simple curvilinear art of Central Australia, or the rich naturalistic art of the north coast, that, almost without exception, the designs illustrated mythical stories that explained the aboriginal's conception of his creation and the surroundings in which he lived.[16]

The aborigines of Central Australia practise the simplest art of all living people. Except for remarkably few naturalistic, but highly formalized figures on the cave walls, those engraved on the sacred objects,[17] painted in ground drawings[18] and on human bodies during ceremonies,[19] are made up almost entirely of combinations of circles, concentric circles, spirals, meanderings and straight lines. This simple curvilinear art has a wide distribution. It is present in Tasmania, South Australia and Central Australia. It reaches to within two hundred miles of Darwin on the north coast, within an equal distance of the Queensland coast, and extends to the west coast of the continent. As these curvilinear designs approach the north-west coast, however, the concentric circles change to concentric squares, and the meandering lines to zigzags.[20] They retain this form until they are absorbed by the naturalistic designs of the north-west aborigines.

The dominant and important elements in the cave art of north-west Australia, particularly in the Kimberley area, are the *Wandjina* figures.[21] These cave paintings, up to fifteen feet in length, depict a human being, with a halo-like band round the head, but usually without a mouth. The *Wandjina* paintings owe their importance in tribal life to their association with rain, rain-making, the rainbow-

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13. Goddard (1941). p. 371.
14. Hale and Tindale (1933-4). pp. 116-55.
15. McConnel (1935). pp. 49-60.
16. Davidson (1937). Figs. 68-71.
17. Mountford (1937a). p. 81.
18. Spencer (1928). Figs. 303-7.
19. Spencer (1928). ch. 19.
20. Davidson (1937). Figs. 52-7.
21. Love (1917). p. 37; (1930). p. 1.

*532 171 serpent, spirit children and the increase of natural species. At certain seasons of the year, the aborigines repaint the *Wandjina* to ensure that rain will fall, and the spirit children will leave the body of the rainbow-serpent to become human beings.

But these *Wandjina* figures dominate the art only within a limited area. As one moves further east, particularly around Napier Broome Bay,[22] some of the caves are filled with many strange figures of human beings, which bear more than a passing resemblance to cave paintings in western Arnhem Land. Still further east again, at the headwaters of the Gregory River,[23] there are large twelve-foot figures of mythical men, also associated with rain and rain-making. Other figures in the adjacent caves are naturalistic, depicting men, women, and the animals of the country.

It is in Arnhem Land, however, that the most interesting and varied forms of aboriginal art have been found. These will be described in the following pages.

1. THE FUNCTION OF PRIMITIVE ART

*532 121 There are two schools of thought on the function of primitive art. One contends that to paint pictures is a propensity of the human mind, and that all true art, either primitive or modern, is a spontaneous activity carried out for its own sake. The other school takes the opposite view, and claims that primitive man is essentially practical; that he paints pictures, say of kangaroos, not specifically because he takes pleasure in the act, but because by so doing he gains a magical control over the creature and can thereby capture it more easily.

My research into the art of the Australian aborigines has convinced me that their art is predominantly non-magical, that is, the aborigines paint because they want to, and not for some material advantage. In a number of places in Australia, however, magic is definitely associated with some aspects of the art, e.g. among the Luritja tribes of Central Australia,[24] and some tribes of north-western Australia.[25] The same holds true of the art of Arnhem Land and especially Oenpelli where, although most of the cave art is purely representational and non-magical, there are certain cave paintings associated with malignant magic and food increase ceremonies.

A review of the evidence gathered from the examination of the cave paintings, bark paintings, ceremonial objects and body decorations of Arnhem Land, suggests that the art of this area can be roughly divided into four classes. (i) art for art's sake, in which the artist paints pictures in caves or on sheets of bark for the pleasure which he gains in so doing; (ii) sacred art, such as is seen in the decoration of the body and of the ceremonial objects;[26] (iii) magical paintings, by means of which the aborigines believe they can control nature, punish enemies, and increase the supply of the food animals;[27] and (iv) didactic bark paintings,

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[22] Mountford (1937), pp. 30-40.

[23] Davidson (1936), p. 64.

[24] Mountford (1943), p. 93.

[25] Love (1930), p. 3; Elkin (1930), p. 277.

[26] p. 400.

[27] See Pl. 62B.

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used at the initiation and age-grading ceremonies to teach the young men the myths and folk-ways of the tribe.[28]

2. ART STYLES AND DISTRIBUTION IN ARNHEM LAND[29]

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The basic art of Arnhem Land, which consists of single or multiple figures on a plain ground, covers the greater part of that area, extending from Groote Eylandt in the east, to the western edge of Arnhem Land, southward as far as the upper Roper River, where it meets the simple, abstract art of Central Australia, and northward, until it is absorbed by the more advanced art of the north-east. Pl. 20D, from Groote Eylandt, is a typical example of the basic art.

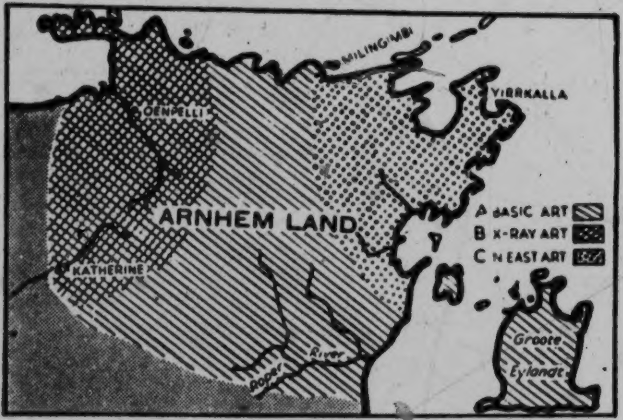

FIG. 2. Distribution of art styles in Arnhem Land

Although, on the western edge of Arnhem Land, this art still consists of single or multiple figures on a plain ground, it is modified by the curious X-ray art. In this, the internal as well as the external details of the creature are shown (Pl. 75B).

As far as we know this X-ray art occupies a limited area, extending from Goulburn Island[30] in the north, along the western edge of Arnhem Land, to possibly the Katherine River. It does not extend far east or west (Fig. 2B).

The more complex art of north-eastern Arnhem Land seems to be confined to an area extending from Blue Mud Bay, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, to Cape Stewart in the north (Fig. 2C).

[28] This was the practice at Oenpelli, p. 221. Warner (1937), p. 318, describes 'a bark house . . . on the ceremonial grounds. . . . The interior walls are painted with realistic and geometric figures (which illustrate the story of the two Wawilak sisters).' Although Warner does not say so, it is likely that these bark paintings, like those the aborigines told me about at Oenpelli, were used to instruct initiates in the tribal myths.

[29] Distribution Map, Fig. 2.

[30] Mountford (1939a), Pl. 14-17.

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The characteristics of the north-eastern art differ from those of the other areas in that the arrangement of the figures is more complex, the craftsmanship of a higher order, and the empty spaces of the background usually filled in with cross-hatching. Pl. 88A is typical.

Between the west, with its X-ray art, and the north-east, with its complicated forms, is an intermediate area centred around the Liverpool River which embodies many of the characteristics of the art on either side of it (Pl. 73D).

Although, within any one area, there are differences due to individual artists, the traditional art style remains the same.

3. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Arnhem Land express their art in several different mediums: (i) paintings on bark; (ii) paintings in caves and shallow rock shelters; (iii) figures carved in wood or moulded in wax; (iv) figures moulded or drawn in wet sea-sand; and (v) figures in bark.

(i) PAINTINGS ON BARK

Scattered references in early literature indicate that the practice of painting on bark was widespread in the southern part of Australia. As early as 1807 Péron's artist,[31] in his sketch of a burial-place on Maria Island, Tasmania, showed painted sheets of bark near by. Bunce[32] also refers to them. Smyth[33] mentions their use on the Wonnangatta River, Gippsland, and Carr[34] on the Paroo River, central New South Wales. In Arnhem Land, the aborigines make their paintings on the inside of their bark huts during the enforced idleness of the rainy season. Spencer[35] was the first to notice them at Oenpelli. It is likely that, wherever the aborigines constructed their huts with sheets of bark, they would have painted designs on the inside of them. However, no painting taken from an Arnhem Land bark shelter would be more than a year old because, long before the onset of the next wet season, it would have been destroyed by the elements, insects or fire.

The bark paintings in the expedition collection, and, in fact, most of those housed in the various universities and museums, have never been part of a wet-weather shelter, but have been made at the request of the investigator.

(ii) PAINTINGS IN CAVES AND SHALLOW ROCK SHELTERS

The cave paintings in Arnhem Land were all found in shallow caves or rock shelters. In Australia, we have no knowledge of paintings in deep caves, such as those made by prehistoric man in Europe.

In some respects the cave paintings of Arnhem Land were more interesting than the bark paintings for, whereas the latter depict the art styles of the present

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[31] Péron (1807-16), Pl. 15.
[32] Bunce (1857), pp. 49-50.
[33] Smyth (1878), p. 292.
[34] Carr (1886), p. 275.
[35] Spencer (1928), p. 792.

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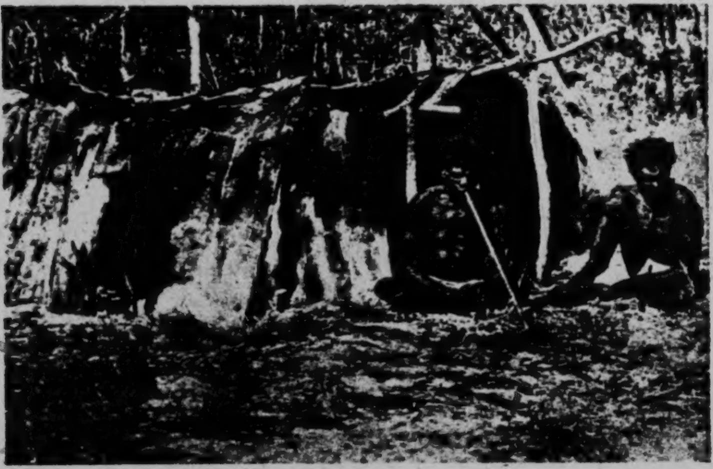

PLATE 3A. Wet-season bark hut, Arnhem Land

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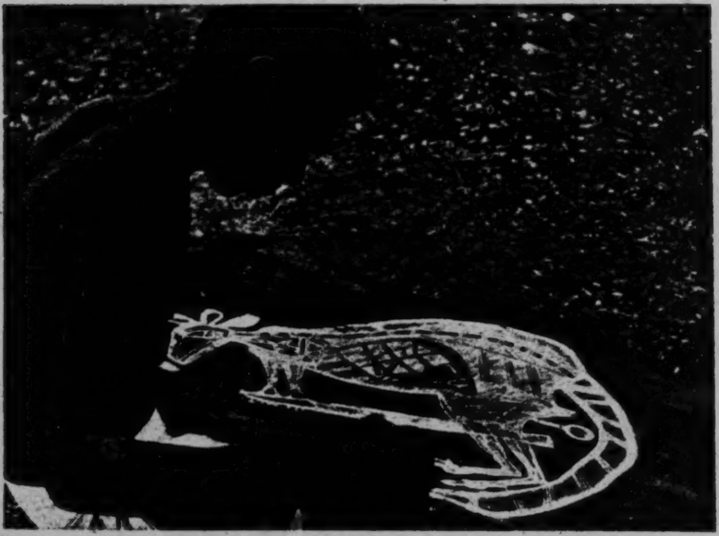

PLATE 3B. Painting a design on bark, Oenpelli

* 532 171 day, in many cave paintings the motifs and styles are different from those now in use.

(iii) FIGURES CARVED IN WOOD OR MOULDED IN WAX

Although carving in the round extends far beyond Arnhem Land,[36] it appears to have reached its highest development in the north-eastern area. The aborigines in and around Yirrkalla also make excellent models in wax. The tribes of Cape York[37] are expert in the same technique.

(iv) FIGURES MOULDED OR DRAWN IN WET SEA-SAND

[857] The aboriginal children of north-eastern Arnhem Land are skilled in both drawing and moulding various creatures in the wet sand of the seashore.[38] As the children of Central Australia also draw designs on the sides of drifting sandhills, it is almost certain that this practice has a much wider distribution than present evidence indicates.

(v) FIGURES IN BARK

The aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land make small human figures by binding the soft paper-bark together with string. Worms[39] records similar figures from north-western Australia.

I. TECHNIQUES

386 The materials used in the production of the bark and cave paintings are: (i) Colours: red, yellow, black and white ochres; (ii) fixative; (iii) brushes; (iv) flat, dried sheets of bark.

(i) COLOURS

The pigments used to paint the designs on the bark sheets, or on the cave walls, were red, yellow, black and white. Although I did not specifically ask the name of the colours at Groote Eylandt, Tindale[40] gives the names of those employed there as white, *tonguru*; yellow, *utarak*; black, *udumach*; and red, *maruwana*. The red was traded from the mainland to Groote Eylandt, the other colours being obtained locally. Rose[41] also refers to trade in red ochre with the mainland tribes. Since the war, the Groote Eylanders have learned that carbon from dry batteries discarded by the Air Force makes an excellent black. This was used extensively both on the bark paintings collected by the expedition and those described by Adam.[42]

At Yirrkalla, the aborigines used four pigments, red, white, yellow and black. The first two belong to the *dua* and the latter to the *jiritja* moiety. Red, *murngun*, and white, *kapun*, are plentiful in the cliffs at Yirrkalla. It can, however, [616]

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[36] Mountford (1951), p. 67, Pl. 1.
[37] McConnel (1935), Pl. 27, Fig. F.
[38] Barrett and Croll (1943), Pl. 11, facing p. 70.
[39] Worms (1942), Fig. 6.
[40] Tindale (1926), p. 116.
[41] Rose (1942), p. 70.
[42] Adam (1951), p. 100.

be gathered only by the *dua* men who give it to those of the opposite moiety. 386
Yellow, *kadangul*, and black, *tjunapul*, come from localities near Gurunga.[43] The 616
collection of the yellow pigments is associated with a ceremony in which men of the *jiritja* moiety only can take part. The *jiritja* distribute these pigments to the *dua* men.

At Oenpelli, most of the colours are obtained by trade. The best red ochre, 171
gunaitdai, comes from a totemic place, Widitjan, about eight days journey south. If this ochre is in short supply, the aborigines use an inferior local ochre. For white, the aborigines use a stone, *outjain* (unidentified), which they first grind into a paste and, when it is partly dry, mould into small cakes. In this form, the pigment is traded over long distances. The yellow ochre, *maragavarum*, which is soft and easily ground, comes from some unidentified place to the far south. I did not gather any details about the source of the black, called *manmai-jangavin*. Apparently it is in short supply because it is rare in both the bark and cave paintings in the Oenpelli area.

Throughout Arnhem Land the pigments are ground, with water, on rough 386
flat stones. One stone is generally reserved for the white pigment. Cockle and 531
small bailer shells are often used as paint pots. Both Tindale[44] and Spencer[45] state that the aborigines mix their pigments to get different shades. At the time of my visit to Groote Eylandt, Yirrkalla and Oenpelli the aborigines were not mixing their colours, the different pebbles of red and yellow ochres accounting for the varying shades of red and yellow in the paintings.

(ii) FIXATIVE

The juice of one of the tree orchids (*Dendrobium* sp.) is used by the Arnhem 531
landers as a fixative on both the bark and the cave paintings. The orchid bulb is 824
cut in halves, broken slightly by chewing, and, in the Oenpelli and Yirrkalla areas, rubbed directly on the bark or rock surface, or in Groote Eylandt, mixed with the colour on the grinding stone. This method of holding the colour is effective as long as the pigments are applied thinly; if not, they tend to flake off.

(iii) BRUSHES

The aboriginal artists of Arnhem Land use three kinds of brushes: 531

(a) A narrow strip of bark, chewed at one end (Fig. 3F). This is held as in 413
Fig. 3C: and used for the broad lines.

(b) A cylindrical stick (Fig. 3E), about three thirty-seconds of an inch in diameter, and three inches long, which has the end slightly burred. With this the artist makes the dots. The brush is tapped on the grinding stone to load it with colour, which is transferred to the painting with the brush held as shown in Fig. 3B.

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[43] See myth of Gurunga, p. 371.

[44] Tindale (1926), p. 117.

[45] Spencer (1928), p. 792.

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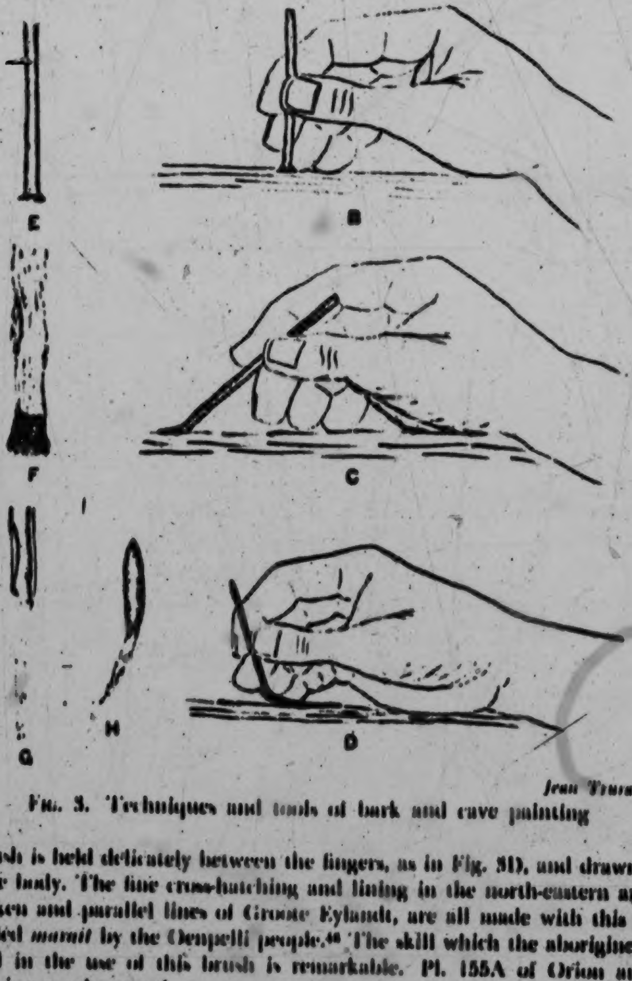
(c) The third brush, made either from a few fibres of a palm leaf (Fig. 3G) or a small feather (Fig. 3A) demands considerable skill in its use. It is long and flexible, resembling the lining brush used by coach painters and sign-writers.



Jean Truran

FIG. 3. Techniques and tools of bark and cave painting

The brush is held delicately between the fingers, as in Fig. 3D, and drawn away from the body. The fine cross-hatching and lining in the north-eastern art, and the broken and parallel lines of Groote Eylandt, are all made with this brush. It is called *marnit* by the Oenpelli people.[46] The skill which the aborigines have achieved in the use of this brush is remarkable. Pl. 155A of Orion and the Pleiades is a good example.

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[46] Pl. 3B shows an aboriginal painting with this brush.

(iv) SHEETS OF BARK

The bark sheets were stripped from one of the local stringy-barks (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*). After having selected a tree of a size suitable for his purpose, and one free from knots and cracks, the aboriginal first made two cuts round the circumference of the tree, usually about three feet apart, then, loosening a strip of bark at the lower cut, pulled it upward, leaving a narrow vertical opening. Into this opening the native inserted the point of a sharpened stick, and gently levered the bark from the tree. The whole operation usually occupied about three minutes. The aboriginal then threw the bark, rough outer surface downward, on a large fire for a short time, after which he stripped off the outer fibrous bark until the inner denser portion was about three-sixteenths of an inch thick. In this condition the bark, being particularly flexible, was easily flattened by levelling a patch of sand, placing the bark on top, covering it with more sand, and leaving it until dry. The drying took several days to a fortnight, depending on the humidity of the atmosphere. Normally, these bark sheets were used for building the wet-weather shelters (Pl. 3A) on the inside of which the aborigines spent much of their spare time painting pictures.[47]

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The method which I adopted was to ask the men to make bark paintings for me, seldom suggesting a subject. At the end of the day, the artists brought their work to my tent, related the associated myth, and explained the meanings of the designs. Under normal tribal conditions, most of the bark paintings are the result of idle hours, when the artist depicts subjects in which he is most interested. But this is not always so. In the Milingimbi and Oenpelli areas, the old men paint designs on sheets of bark which illustrate secret totemic myths. These are exhibited to the novitiates during their initiation and age-grading ceremonies.[48]

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5. THE ARTISTS

Some writers suggest that only a limited number of aboriginal men are employed as artists.[49] This is not so. All men were willing to and could paint, although, naturally, some are more skilled than others. The men shown on Pl. 4 produced bark paintings that belonged to Groote Eylandt, Yirrkalla, Oenpelli and Liverpool River areas respectively.

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Pl. 4B is *Nangapiana* from Groote Eylandt, who with his relatives, *Tatalara* and *Jaliaura*, produced many fine bark paintings. Pl. 21E and Pl. 25B are the work of *Nangapiana*. *Mini-mini*, mentioned by Adam,[50] also made a number of paintings. He did not, however, employ the fine brushwork of *Nangapiana*, although the results were attractive and colourful. Pl. 30C is *Mini-mini's* work.

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[47] As the supply of prepared sheets of bark at Yirrkalla and Oenpelli became exhausted, I provided the artists with sheets of rough-surfaced dark grey and green paper. The paintings on these sheets of paper can be distinguished in the illustrations by the smooth ground.

[48] Warner (1937), p. 318; also p. 224.

[49] Adam (1951), p. 103.

[50] Adam (1951), p. 104.

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A Mauwulan, Yirrkalla

B Nangapiana, Groote Eylandt

C Kumutun, Oenpelli

D Wulkini, Liverpool River

PLATE 4. Artists of Arnhem Land

Pl. 4A is *Mauwulan*, one of a group of artists from Yirrkalla, who produced many attractive bark paintings (Pl. 99A, 85E). He also carved the wooden figures of *Tjambuwal* (Pl. 130A, B), *Malwulwi* (Pl. 153A, B), and others. 531 [115]

Pl. 4C is *Kumutun*, an old Kakadu aboriginal,[51] one of the last of the original inhabitants of Oenpelli. This man was a storehouse of aboriginal beliefs and mythological stories. Pl. 55D and Pl. 70B are his work.

Pl. 4D is an aboriginal, *Walkini*, from the Liverpool River area. He was younger than many of the other artists in the group. He produced Pl. 72D, Pl. 73A, and many others.

Although these four men, each in his own locality, painted many attractive pictures, there were many others who were equally skilled. I did not meet an aboriginal who could not, or did not want to paint. There is certainly no special artist class. [463]

In watching these men and others at work, I was impressed by their sureness. They seemed to have a fully conceived picture in their mind before they started to paint; it was seldom that an artist altered a design or corrected a brush stroke.

Although, for the sake of simplicity, I have referred to the designs on bark as paintings it is evident, in a narrower interpretation, that some are paintings, i.e. painting in spaces, and others are brush drawings, that is, the designs are built up by a series of lines. There are also numerous examples in which the figures are first painted and, when dry, details are added in fine lines.

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[51] This tribe, now almost extinct, was visited by Spencer in 1912.

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THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

DURING THE EIGHT weeks the expedition camped at Yirrkalla[1] my research was concentrated on bark paintings, carved animal and human figures, and their associated myths. 114 121 531

F. M. Setzler and F. D. McCarthy, while engaged on archaeological research at Milingimbi, collected several painted ceremonial objects from that locality. The Rev. Arthur F. Ellemor also arranged for the aborigines of Milingimbi to make a number of bark paintings for me. These objects and bark paintings from Milingimbi are valuable because they indicate little change in the art forms over north-eastern Arnhem Land. Setzler and McCarthy also assisted me in the interpretation of some of the Yirrkalla bark paintings.

When I returned to Yirrkalla for a short period during 1952 I was able to check the work of other investigators as well as my own. As the art forms of both Yirrkalla and Milingimbi are similar they will be treated as one unit from north-east Arnhem Land.

Barrett[2] figured cave paintings from the Wessel Islands, as well as fish and animals which the aboriginal children moulded in the sand. The Berndts[3] described a series of sacred carved figures from Yirrkalla and later[4] another series of secular carved figures from the same area; they[5] also published a myth of the moon and the words of the song belonging to it. Elkin and the Berndts[6] described a number of bark paintings, carved animal and human figures, and ceremonial objects. It is, however, from Warner's[7] descriptions and analyses of the culture of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land that we have learned so much about the mythology, philosophy, social organization and the clan and language groups of north-eastern Arnhem Land. Thomson[8] has described the movement of goods and the trade cycles of eastern Arnhem Land.

1. BARK PAINTINGS, DECORATED OBJECTS AND MYTHS

(1) HUMAN BEINGS

The Man, Djunkgao

Among the aborigines of Arnhem Land the myths of the *Wawalik* sisters 723* and of the *Djunkgao* form the bases of all the important ceremonies, the myth 796 of the *Wawalik* for the *gunabibi*, *ulmark*, *djungguan* and *marndiella* rituals, and the myth of *Djunkgao* for the *dua* and *jiritja narra* rituals.[9]

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[1] Map, Fig. 1.
[2] Barrett and Croll (1943), p. 70.
[3] Berndt (1948), pp. 309-26.
[4] Berndt (1949), pp. 213-20, Pl. 1-3.
[5] Berndt (1948a), pp. 17-56.
[6] Elkin and the Berndts (1950).
[7] Warner (1937).
[8] Thomson (1949).
[9] Warner (1937), p. 241.

[pp. 16-266 not processed]

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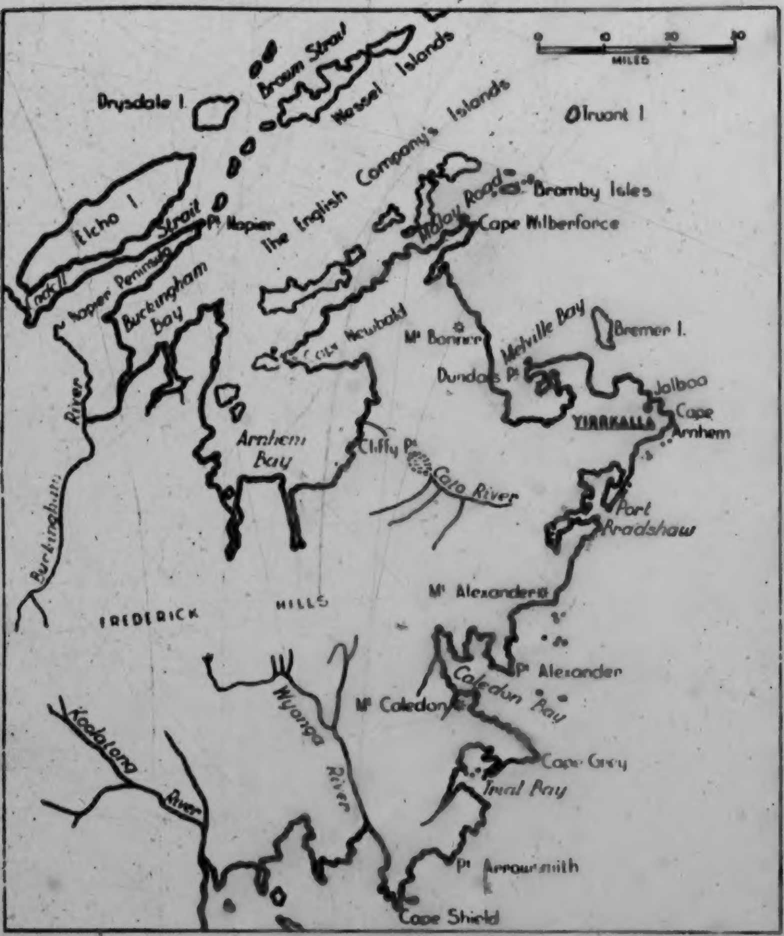
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MILES
Drysdale I.
Brown Strait
Wessel Islands
Truant I.
The English Company's Islands
Elcho I.
Strait
Pt. Napier
Cadell
Napier Peninsula
Buckingham Bay
Malay Road
Bromby Isles
Cape Wilberforce
Cape Newbald
Mt. Bonner
Melville Bay
Bremer I.
Dundas Pt.
Jalboo
Cape Arnhem
YIRRKALLA
River
Arnhem Bay
Cliffy Pt.
Cato River
Port Bradshaw
Buckingham
FREDERICK
HILLS
Mt. Alexander
Pt. Alexander
Caledon Bay
Mt. Caledon
Wyonga
River
Koolatong
River
Cape Grey
Trial Bay
Pt. Arrowsmith
Cape Shield

FIG. 57. Yirrkalla area

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The *Wawalik* myth appears to belong more particularly to the western side of Arnhem Land, and the *Djunkgao* myth to the eastern. The former myth appears to be the more complete; in fact, in some localities the myth of *Djunkgao* actually takes on some of the elements of that of the *Wawalik* sisters (p. 278). On the eastern side of Arnhem Land *Djunkgao* is a man; on the western side, two

women. In my collections of bark paintings there is, fortunately, a series dealing 773* with the *Djunkgao* myth, which is associated with localities extending from Port 776 Bradshaw, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, to Goulburn Island on the north coast. 184 These paintings show a gradual shift from male to female dominance as the myth moves westward.

At Jelangbara, near Port Bradshaw, where *Djunkgao*[10] and his sister first landed, it was *Djunkgao* with his digging sticks who created most of the waterholes and topography, his sister being relatively unimportant. At Arnhem Bay[11] some thirty miles westward, although *Djunkgao* created the waterholes, he was under the dominance of his sister, *Madalait*. About fifty miles west of Arnhem Bay, and south of Elcho Island, is a sacred waterhole, Milmigarak, which was [778] created by the *Djunkgao*, who by then had become two sisters, instead of brother and sister. Some elements of the *Wawalik* myth are incorporated in this one.[12] In the *Djunkgao* myths of the Milingimbi area, recorded by Warner,[13] the *Djunkgao* are two important female ancestors who named the animals, plants and birds, and created many sacred waterholes.

As most of the bark paintings dealing with *Djunkgao* have separate myths, each painting will be described in association with the relevant myth.

Djunkgao and Madalait at Port Bradshaw

The myths associated with this collection of bark paintings, carved figures 773* and ceremonial objects deal with both the arrival of *Djunkgao* and his sister *Madalait* at Port Bradshaw[14] and the origin of some of the totemic designs of the *rivedjingu* language (*mata*) group associated with the *Djunkgao* at Port Bradshaw.

In early *bumun* (creation) times *Djunkgao*, his wife *Walo*, the sun-woman[15] their daughter, *Bara-bararinja* and *Madalait*, his sister, lived at Tjurinjina, a place far across the water to the east of Yirrkalla.[16]

One day *Djunkgao*, having decided to go on a journey to Port Bradshaw, set out in his bark canoe, taking his sister with him, but leaving his wife, the sun woman, *Walo*, and daughter, *Bara-bararinja*, behind. On their way the brother and sister passed and named Urapingboi, Bauadi, Garangaranbi, Kakoubi, Waipingboi, Takalpa and Bilapinja Islands.

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[10] Myth, p. 273. [11] Myth, p. 275. [12] Myth, p. 275.

[13] Warner (1937), p. 336.

[14] The carved figures and ceremonial objects are described in Part 5.

[15] Berndt (1952), p. 3, states that the Djanggawul [*Djunkgao*] people were closely associated with the sun. One myth tells that the sun had two daughters who later became the *Djunkgao* sisters. In the myth of the sun, p. 502, which I collected in association with the relevant bark painting, Pl. 85E, the sun-woman, *Walo*, was the wife of *Djunkgao*. Their home was not at Purelko (Berndt's Bralku or Bralgu), but at Tjurinjina, some distance beyond.

[16] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 28, state that Djanggawul [Warner's and my *Djunkgao*], his two sisters, Maralaitj [my *Madalait*] and Bildjiwuraroiju, and a companion, Bralbral, came from Bralku [Warner's and my Purelko]. Later Berndt (1952), p. 2, corrects this statement and records that the party 'came from a far distant country, and on their way to the Arnhem Land mainland stopped at Bralgu [Purelko], the *dua* moiety island of the dead.' [114]

My aboriginal informants were definite that the *Djunkgao* party came, not from Purelko, the *dua* 'heaven', but from Tjurinjina which, although it lies in the same general direction as Purelko, is not the same place. This statement, and Berndt's later correction, are important because they dispose of the evidence that an important mythical ancestor originated in the home of the dead, evidence which might give rise to a theory that the aborigines of Yirrkalla believe in reincarnation. [775]

When passing Takalpa Island *Djunkgao*, hearing the calls of the flying foxes, *maiakou*, picked up his music sticks[17] and made a song about these creatures and their calls.

Djunkgao beached his canoe on the sandy shore of Bilapinja Island, and on looking back saw his wife, the sun-woman, sending out great banners of light across the eastern sky as she rose from her camp at Tjurinjina in readiness for her daily journey. The light from the sunrise was, in turn, reflected from the crests of the waves as they broke on the shore. The spectacle pleased *Djunkgao* so much that he composed a series of songs about the sunrise, the reflected light from the waves and the sounds made by the waves as they rushed across the sand.[18] He also decreed that the sunrise and the light on the waves should be both his 'mark' and that of his descendants forever.[19]

[136] *Djunkgao* made another song when he heard the harsh call of the black cockatoo, *natili* (*Calyptorhynchus banksi*), and two more at Waipingboi Island, one describing a hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, he saw floating on the surface of the water, the other about the oyster-catcher, *kalaka*, seated on a rock.[20]

As *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* were paddling along the shores of Aparina Island, near the entrance of Port Bradshaw, he was attracted by the beauty of the light reflected from the ridges on the sea-shore and the meandering lines left on the wet beach by the sand-dollars.[21] Again, these were the subject of a song. At Aparina, the *Baijini*[22] were cooking trepang on his, the *dua*, side of the island. *Djunkgao* ordered them to leave, made a song about the incident and taking two of the paddles from the *Baijini* as a punishment, crossed the sea to Jelangbara, a place north of the entrance to Port Bradshaw.[23]

As the two ancestors walked inland, they admired the lines of sand-hills at Jelangbara which, they thought, resembled the waves of the sea. *Djunkgao* also noticed a *dua* lizard, *tjunda*, walking along the crest of one of the drifting sand-hills, and the lines of sand that ran down either side of the sand-hill from under his feet. He made songs about these incidents, and, at the same time, decreed that whenever the *dua* men of that locality painted the design of the lizard, *tjunda*, they must always include the parallel marks of the running sand.[24]

Djunkgao and *Madalait* always carried a digging stick in each hand which they pushed into the ground as they went along.[25] At Jelangbara, *murinja* trees (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) still grow at those places. At the end of the day, the brother and sister made their respective camps some distance apart by pushing back the sand-hills.[26] Next morning *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* moved westward and, according to the Yirrkalla informants, again made camps at Arnhem Bay,[27] Napier Peninsula,[28] Milingimbi,[29] Goulburn Island,[30] and Cape Don. 773* 532*

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[17] Pl. 132E., F. illustrates the music stick of *Djunkgao*.

[18] Bark painting, Pl. 85E., left-hand panel.

[19] Bark painting, Pl. 85E, left-hand panel.

[20] Bark painting, Pl. 85A.

[21] Pl. 88D.

[22] Pl. 87B.

[23] Bark painting, Pl. 85B.

[24] Bark painting, Pl. 88D.

[25] In other localities, the holes made by the digging sticks became sacred wells. Pl. 85E, right-hand side.

The aborigines of the *dua* moiety produced fourteen bark paintings, two carved figures and five decorated ceremonial objects,[31] all dealing with the myth of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*. 773* 616

Djunkgao at Bilapinja Island

The left-hand side of Pl. 85E and the upper panel of Pl. 86C describe the sunwoman, *Walo*, rising from her camp at Tjurinjina at the same time as *Djunkgao* and his sister, *Madalait*, beached their canoe on Bilapinja Island.[32] The diagonal lines are the rays of light from the sunrise, and the parallel lines, the light reflected from the crests of the incoming waves. The bands of yellow, black and white across the disc of the sun are symbolic of the red-feathered string ornaments which the sun-woman wore round her head and waist as she travelled across the sky. 773* 532*

Djunkgao at Waipingboi Island

As *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* were passing Waipingboi Island the former made a song about a hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, in the water, and an oyster-catcher, *kalaka* (*Haematopus ostralegus*) seated on a rock. The turtle is now a boulder which is submerged at high tide, and the oyster-catcher a tall pillar of rock projecting above the water. [134]

On the upper panel of Pl. 85A is the hawksbill turtle, and below, the oyster-catcher. The cross-hatched panels symbolize the seas breaking over the totemic rocks.

Djunkgao and the Sand-dollars at Aparina

When *Djunkgao* was paddling along the coast of Aparina Island he noticed the light reflected from both the ridges left in the wet sand by the receding tide and the marks made by the sand-dollars (*Laganum depressum*) as they moved along the wet beach. [126]

The panels of dots on Pl. 85D are the sand-dollars, which are still numerous in that locality, and the cross-hatched panels, the light reflecting from the ridges on the beach made by the sand-dollars.[33]

Djunkgao and the Baijini at Aparina Island

When Djunkgao and his sister landed on Aparina Island they found that the *Baijini*[34] (who were *jiritja* people) were cooking trepang on the *dua* half of

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[26] Bark painting, Pl. 85E., right-hand panel.
[27] Bark painting, Pl. 87C.
[28] Bark painting, Pl. 87A.
[29] Bark painting, Pl. 87D.
[30] Bark painting, Pl. 86E.
[31] Described in Part 5.
[32] The right-hand side of Pl. 85E will be described on p. 273.
[33] Pl. 86D shows the tracks of sand-dollars.
[34] The *Baijini* were a fair-skinned people who came to Port Bradshaw to collect trepang. They are now included in the mythological stories, p. 333.

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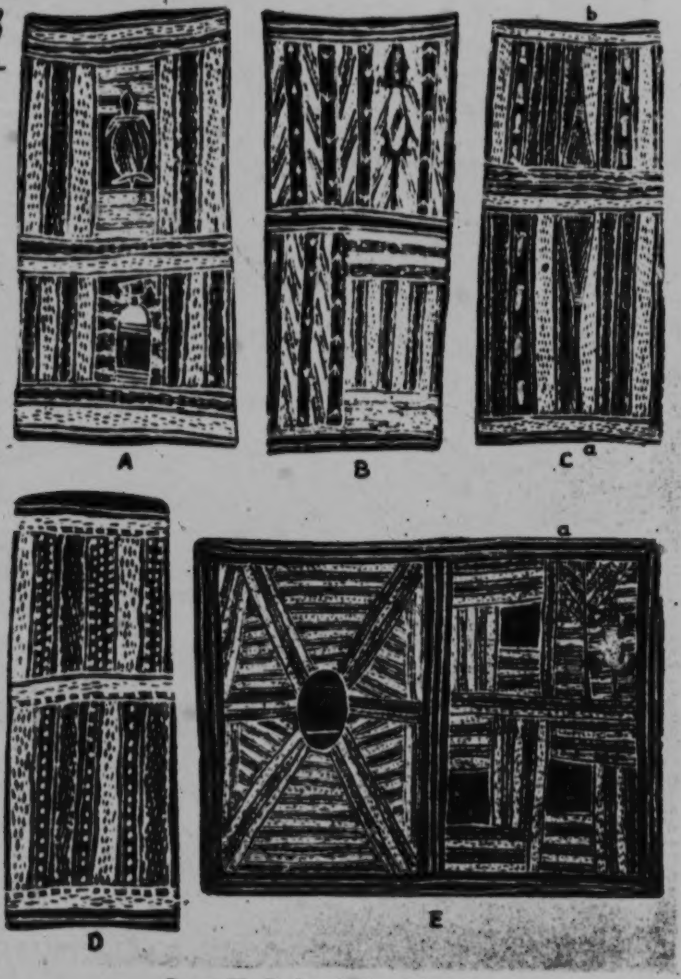

PLATE 85. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A Djunkgao at Waipingboi Island
B Djunkgao and the lizard, tjunda
C Djunkgao and the Baijini
D Djunkgao at Aparina
E Djunkgao and Madalait at Bilapinja Island and Jelangbara

the island. *Djupkgao* asked the *Baijini* to shift their camp to the *jiritja* side, and as a punishment for their trespass confiscated two of their paddles. Two bark paintings deal with this part of the *Djunkgao* myth.

On the lower-left and right-hand panels of Pl. 87B are the paddles which *Djunkgao* took from the *Baijini* as a punishment. The cross-hatched panels throughout the painting symbolize both the fires used for the cooking of the trepang and the ashes and charcoal from those fires. The footmarks are those of the *Baijini*.

On Pl. 85C the meanings are similar. Paddles *a* and *b* are those which once belonged to the *Baijini*. On either side of these are lines of *Baijini* footprints. The intermediate cross-hatched panels indicate the ashes and charcoal from the cooking fires.

Djunkgao and Madalait at Jelangbara

When *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* reached Jelangbara, north of the entrance of Port Bradshaw, they admired the parallel sand-hills and the lizard, *tjunda*, which lived among them. When *Djunkgao* saw the lines of soft sand which ran from under the feet of the lizard as it walked along the crest of a sand-hill, he decreed that this would be the mark of his people forever, i.e. the *jiridjingu mata*[35] design.

Plate 86A is the sand-hill and lizard design decreed by *Djunkgao*. In the centre is *tjunda*, with the running sand design on either side of it. The groups of parallel cross-hatched panels on the left represent the light on the breaking waves seen by *Djunkgao* at Bilapinja Island, and on the right the parallel sand-hills at Jelangbara.

Plate 86B refers to the lizard, *tjunda*, and its tracks in the sand. The central vertical panel, *a*, is the sand-hill at Jelangbara along which the lizard travelled. The meandering line indicates the mark of his tail, and the herring-bone pattern, the sand disturbed by the feet of *tjunda* running down the slope of the sand-hill. The lizard travelled toward the top of the painting on the left-hand side and toward the bottom on the right.

Plate 86D depicts the lizard at Jelangbara, with the parallel lines of running sand on either side of it. The black semicircles are holes the lizard dug at the totemic place, the cross-hatched vertical panels the sand thrown out, and the series of meandering lines the mark of the lizard's tail in the sand.

The left-hand side of the painting, Pl. 85E, which deals with the sunrise, was described on p. 271. The groups of parallel lines on the right-hand panel refer to the sand-hills which *Djunkgao* and his sister admired at Jelangbara. The three dark-coloured squares[36] are patches of bare earth among the sand-hills.

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[35] See *mata* design, Fig. 61D.

[36] Although my aboriginal informants stated that there was only one woman, *Madalait*, in the canoe with *Djunkgao*, the fact that there are three camps shown in this bark painting suggests that, as recorded by Berndt (1952), p. 2, there were two. There is no evidence, however, that the man, *Bralbral*, accompanied them.

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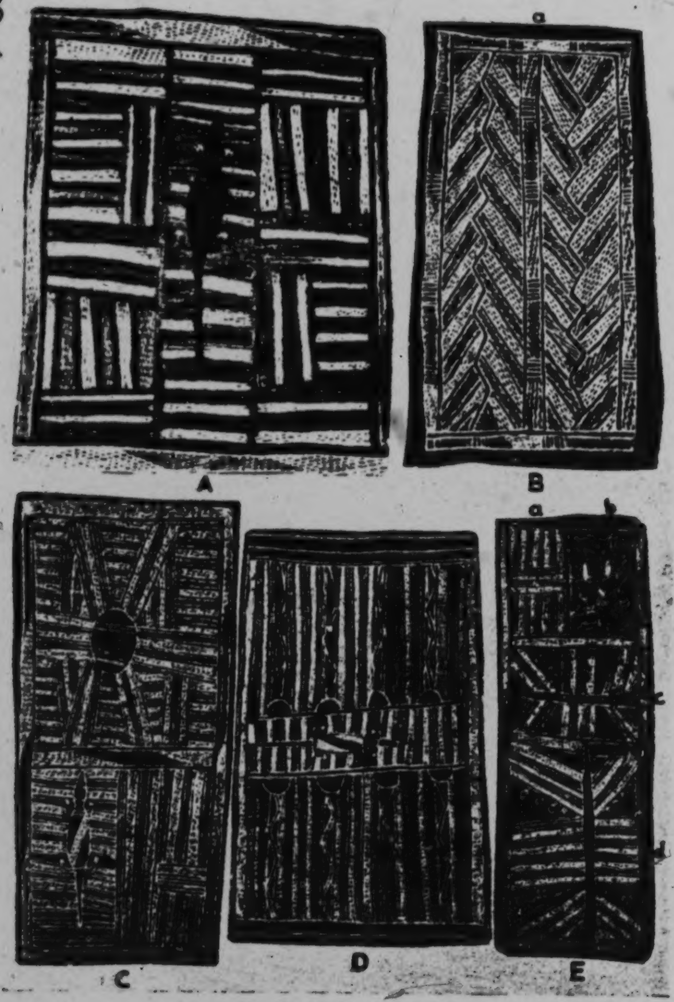

PLATE 86. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, B, C, D Djunkgao and Madalait at Jelangbara
E The Djunkgao sisters at Goulburn Island

once the camp of *Djunkgao* and his sister. The aborigines pointed out that, because *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* were brother and sister, their camps were some distance apart. 773* 532*

At *a* is the lizard *tjunda* resting under one of the *murinja* (casuarina) trees created by *Djunkgao*. The groups of parallel lines on either side of the lizard indicate again the lines of soft sand which ran from under its feet as it walked along the crest of the sand-hill.

Plate 86C is more or less a duplicate of Pl. 85F. It is included because of the attractive design and fine brush work. The meanings are similar, the upper panel representing the sunrise, the lower right the parallel sand-hills, and the lower left the lizard, *tjunda*, at Jelangbara.

Djunkgao and the Lizard, Tjunda

Plate 85B pictures the lizard, *tjunda*, associated with *Djunkgao*, at a *dua* totemic place at Arnhem Bay. The painting is figured because it is an example of how the different language groups illustrate similar subjects. The language group, or *mata*, of Port Bradshaw pictures the running sand design on either side of the lizard, *tjunda*,[37] while the members of the *kapin mata* of Arnhem Bay modify the design by replacing the running sand design with that of the leaves of the *dara* palm leaf.[38] The tracks are those of the swamp-bird, *buota*.[39]

Djunkgao and Madalait at Arnhem Bay

When *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* reached Arnhem Bay, *Djunkgao* pushed his digging sticks into the ground and created many fresh-water springs. When the water started to rise *Djunkgao* told his sister that the wells would be sacred and that she would be in charge.

Plate 87C pictures the open plain and swamp country near Arnhem Bay, [133] some of which is periodically covered by the sea. The small circles at the junctions of the straight lines are the springs created by *Djunkgao*, the diagonal lines the channels made in the mud of the mangrove swamps by the water flowing from the sacred wells, and the footmarks those of a mangrove curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*).[40]

The Djunkgao Sisters at Milmigarak

This myth refers to the two *Djunkgao* sisters[41] at the Milmigarak waterhole, 776 situated on the Napier Peninsula, south of Elcho Island. In mythical times the 773* two sisters, after travelling extensively over the surrounding country and naming 532*

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[37] *Mata* design, Fig. 64D. [38] *Mata* design, Fig. 64F.

[39] The tracks of the same bird are present on the music stick of *Madalait*, Pl. 133E, F, and on the painted coffin, Pl. 102A.

[40] This is the design of the *Nainmeri mata* of Arnhem Bay, Fig. 64C.

[41] As mentioned earlier, p. 269, the *Djunkgao* group changed from a brother and sister to two sisters as the myth moved westward.

776 the various creatures and plants, created a sacred waterhole, Milmigarak, which
*773 later was inhabited by the giant mythical serpent, *wangaruk*.

One day the elder sister, when dipping water from the springs, accidentally
*532 polluted it with her menstrual blood.[42] This pollution so annoyed the serpent that he caused the water to boil over, i.e. flow out.[43] Even at the present day,
[783 when *wangaruk* becomes annoyed by the presence of unauthorized trespassers,
841] he tries to leave the waterhole. But as soon as his head is visible the aboriginal medicine-men send him back by singing powerful chants, for should *wangaruk* start wandering over the land he would destroy everyone.

Wangaruk is of great length and size. He has a prominent nose, large eyes and a luxuriant beard. His head, however, is entirely bald, having the same
[821] appearance as a grey weathered boulder.[44] Although *wangaruk* has a voice like thunder, he does not appear to be associated with either the rain or the rainbow. Only the old men of the tribe are allowed to visit Milmigarak, drink its waters, or catch its fish.

On Pl. 87A the cross-hatched disc in the centre of the painting is the waterhole, Milmigarak. The other discs are non-sacred waters in the surrounding country, and the parallel lines native roads between them. The darker-coloured cross-hatched panels *a*, *b*, etc., represent the menstrual blood of the *Djunkgao* sister which polluted the waterhole.

The Djunkgao Sisters at Milingimbi

*773 This is a fragment of a myth from Milingimbi, which relates how the
*532 *Djunkgao* women created a spring of water at Milnur, a place on the mainland, south of Elcho Island.

On Pl. 87D the two women, shown as lizards, with their carrying-baskets
[482] beside them, occupy the upper part of the painting. The design below symbolizes the sacred waterhole created by them.[45]

The Djunkgao Sisters at Goulburn Island

Plate 86F depicts a swamp at Goulburn Island which is associated with the *Djunkgao* sisters.

On panel *b* are a number of water-birds catching fish, one of them having a fish in its mouth. Panel *a*, which is similar to the sand-hill design of the *gurdjingu mala* of Port Bradshaw,[46] represents the ripples on the swamp caused by the water-birds as they chase the fish.

[42] This fragment has been borrowed from the *Wawalik* myth, see p. 278.

[43] The mythical serpents in the Oenpelli area cause their waterholes to overflow when they are annoyed (see p. 200, p. 218, etc.).

[44] The head of the mythical serpent living in the spring near the Elcho Island mission station is said to resemble a stone.

[45] This design is similar to that used for the sacred wells, shown in Pl. 87A. This may be a *mala* design belonging to a *dua* language group (see Fig. 61F).

[46] The same design is present on a crayon drawing dealing with *Djunkgao* at Port Bradshaw. Berndt. 1952. Pl. 7.

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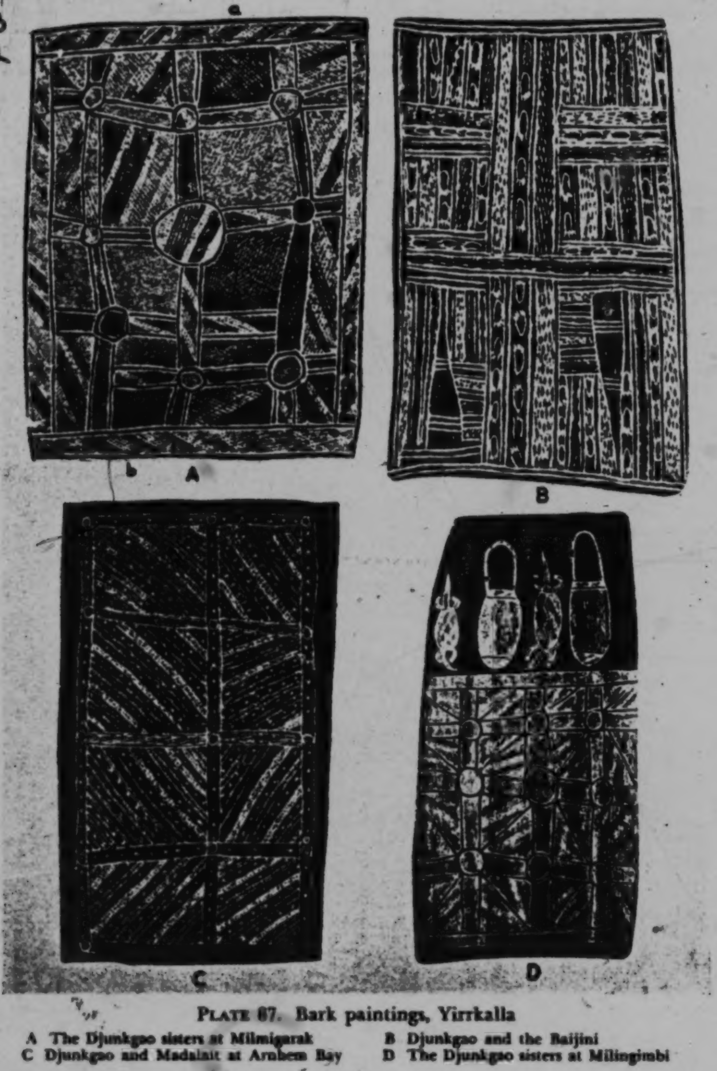

PLATE 67. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The Djunkgao sisters at Milmigarak
B Djunkgao and the Baijini
C Djunkgao and Madalait at Arnhem Bay
D The Djunkgao sisters at Milingimbi

*773 *532 In panel *c* are unidentified palm trees with fruit hanging from their upper branches.[47] The upper sloping lines are the branches, the lower, the water flowing around the roots, and the cross-hatched central band the swamp.

The Wawalik Sisters

*773 The story of the travels of the *Wawalik*[48] sisters is the basis of four great ceremonial cycles, the *djungguan*, the *gunabibi*, the *ulmark* and the *marndiella*. It is one of the most important myths of north and north-eastern Arnhem Land.

The myth associated with the bark painting (Pl. 88A), although abridged and differing somewhat from Warner's *Wawilak* myth, nevertheless contains the basic elements, i.e. the naming of the plants and food animals, their flight when placed on the fire, the profanement of the sacred pool, and the swallowing and later regurgitation of the women by the serpent, *jurlungur*.

*773 824 825 At Yirrkalla the aborigines told me that the *Wawalik* sisters came from a locality far away to the west. As they travelled they collected and named all the yams. They are: *arituna*, black inside; *jakwa*,[49] white inside; *mawoka*, milky white inside, with a black stem; *dilkarun*, with hair from its roots like a beard; *wunga-rapu*, red inside with black roots; *kungari*, a large round yam that must be soaked all night to make it edible; and many others. The sisters also caught and named a number of the food animals and reptiles—the kangaroo, *karitjimba*, the lizard, *tjunda*, the bandicoot, *warnt-kura*, the blanket lizard, *baltjira*, to mention but a few.

*773 When they reached a waterhole called Mirrirmina,[50] the elder sister, who was pregnant, begged her companion to make a camp because she felt that she was about to give birth to her child. The younger woman quickly built a bark hut, placed her sister inside, then lit a fire to cook the yams. However, no sooner had she placed them on the fire than they all came to life and ran away. Again she tried to prepare a meal, this time placing the dead animals and reptiles on the coals, but they too became alive and escaped into the forest. Both of the *Wawalik* women then retired into the hut and soon afterward the elder sister gave birth to a son.

*773 776 In the bottom of the nearby waterhole, Mirrirmina, lived a huge mythical brown python called *jurlungur* (non-sacred name, *witik*). The odour of the blood of the birth so annoyed him that he first came to the surface and sent flashes of lightning into the sky, then, leaving his waterhole, approached the but to punish the women. When the women saw the enraged serpent approaching, they sang many magical songs[51] and danced many powerful dances, to send the serpent back to his waterhole, but he still came on. In desperation, the women went inside and blocked the openings of their hut with bark and leaves to keep *jurlungur* at bay. But the serpent pushed his head inside, swallowed the child, then the younger and finally the elder sister. He then returned to the waterhole, but later came again to the surface and regurgitated the women and child, whose bodies are now large rocks. 773* 776

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[47] Panel *a* resembles the *mata* design of the *riradjingu* language group of Port Bradshaw (Fig. 63D), and the sloping lines on panel *d* that of the *kopin mata* (Fig. 63E).

[48] The *Wawalik* myth and the four ceremonies are described and analysed in considerable detail by Warner (1937), p. 335. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 32, make a short reference to the same myth and ceremonies. Berndt (1951a) also describes the *kunapipi* (*gunabibi*).

[49] The yam, *jakwa*, was also created by *Mainbunu*, the wife of *Bonda-bonda*, p. 311. The flower of the yam, *mawoka*, is used by the spirits at Dambalia (Bremer Island). See myth of journey of the dead, p. 323.

[50] Warner (1937), p. 251.

On Pl. 88A, the rectangle at the top represents the bark hut built by the women. Within are the two *Wawalik* sisters and the newly-born child. *Jurlungur*, at the bottom, *a*, is leaving his sacred well. In the next position the serpent has encircled the hut, thrust his head inside and swallowed the child. On the lower right, he is returning to the sacred well of Mirrirmina after having swallowed the whole family. 773* 776 532*

The designs on either side of *jurlungur* at *a* represent the water in the sacred Mirrirmina well. The central parallel lines, with the footmarks between them, indicate the path of the women leading to the hut. The design to the left of the path symbolizes the blood which offended *jurlungur*, and that to the left, dry ground. The designs on the right-hand edge of the painting again represent the water in the sacred well of Mirrirmina.

Banaitja and his Son, or Counterpart, Laitjun, at Blue Mud Bay

Banaitja[52] and his son, or counterpart, *Laitjun*, are to the *jiritja* moiety of eastern Arnhem Land what *Djunkgao*, his sister *Madalait* and the *Wawalik* sisters are to the *dua*. Neither the mythology nor the ceremonies of *Banaitja* and *Laitjun* are as varied or as extensive as those of the *dua* ancestors. 616 773*

Banaitja came from the south-west[53] to Blue Mud Bay during the time that ordinary men and women lived in the world. He was a huge man, with deep chest and long powerful limbs, who always carried a long spear, called *balinin*, and a spear-thrower, on one end of which was a tassel of human hair.[54] As he walked around the countryside he shouted 'Wah-wah' in a voice so loud that 773*

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[51] One of the songs which the sisters sang is still used by the women in the *ulmark* ceremonies when they hear the sound of the log gong. This sound is supposed to be the voice of the serpent (Warner, 1937, p. 311).

[52] In some of the myths *Banaitja* recreated himself in the name of *Laitjun*, in another he is the father of *Laitjun*, and in still another he travelled as *Banaitja* through a number of localities, including Cape Arnhem. The fact, however, that Warner (1937), p. 361, in his description of the *jiritja narra* ceremonies of Milingimbi refers only casually to *Banaitja*, and makes no reference whatever to *Laitjun*, suggests both that the *Banaitja* myth is unimportant in the Milingimbi area, and that the creation of *Laitjun* is only a local development in the Blue Mud Bay area.

[53] The carved figure of *Banaitja*, Pl. 135A, B, shows him to be sub-incised. As sub-incision is not practised in Arnhem Land, this would suggest that the *Banaitja* myth extends south into the area of sub-incision. [304]

[54] A similar spear-thrower was used by the members of the *wirinikapaia* moiety (equivalent to the *jiritja*) during the ceremonial bathing of the *amawaltja* rituals of Groote Eylandt, p. 56. [171]

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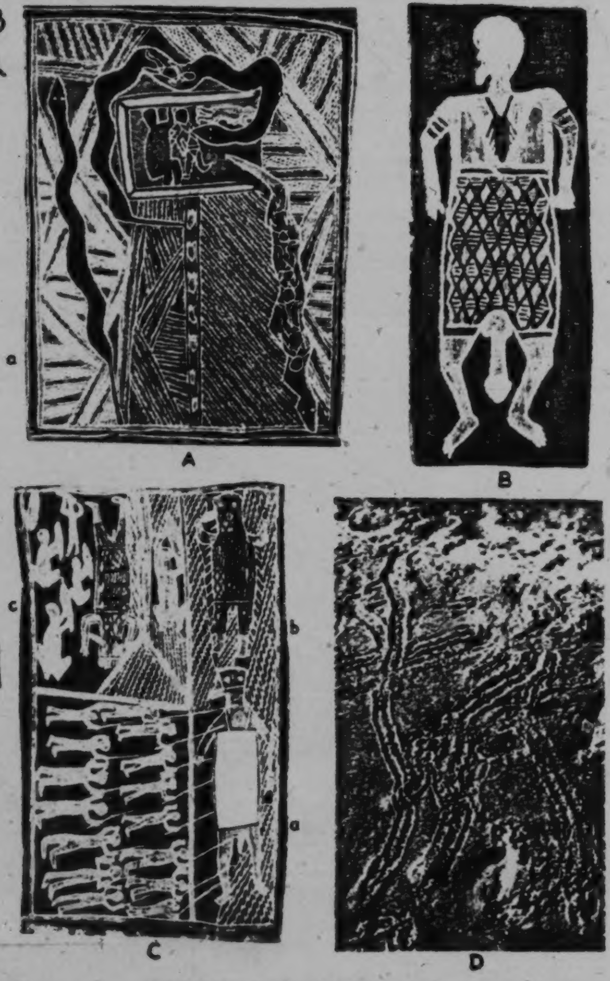

PLATE 88. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla
A The Wawalik sisters B Laitjun C Banaitja
D Marks of the sand-dollars at Aparina

the aborigines either ran into the forest to hide themselves or climbed the trees 773* to get out of his way. But when the aboriginal men saw that *Banaitja* was making his camp on the Duluru-waltjalapa swamp, which was close to their territory, they decided to kill him. Waiting until *Banaitja* was asleep, the aborigines crept up and cast many spears into his body. Roaring with pain, *Banaitja* jumped into the swamp, calling out as he sank beneath the water:

'You'll never kill me properly. I'll come again before long.'

For many days *Banaitja* stayed on the bottom of the swamp, pulling the 773* spears from his body and waiting for his wounds to heal. Then one day he rose 532* from the water, his body covered with painted designs and carrying in his right hand a bundle of paper-bark[55] tightly bound with string, with which he started to beat the ground, the dull thudding sounds of which so frightened the aborigines that they all ran away.

Banaitja called to the adult men not to be afraid, for not only had he brought them many good things but he had much to tell them. After some hesitancy, the men gathered round to hear what he had to say. *Banaitja* first announced that he had changed his name to *Laitjun*. He then showed the members of each *mata* (language group) which designs they should paint both [302] on their bodies and their sacred objects during the times of ceremony, so that everyone would know to which *mata* group the others belonged. The designs they would use were those he had painted on his own body.[56]

As soon as each language group or *mata* had copied their own designs from his body, *Laitjun* transformed himself into a large white-barked eucalyptus tree which can still be seen on the shores of the Duluru-waltjalapa swamp of Blue Mud Bay.

As time went on the *jiritja* people became so contrite over the killing of *Banaitja* that they made a replica of his bark bundle, calling it by his name, *banaitja*. Each time the aborigines hear its dull thudding noise in the secret rituals they are reminded of their killing of the giant man and his gift to them.

Three bark paintings and a carved figure[57] belong to the myth of *Banaitja* or *Laitjun*.

Plate 88C: pictures *Banaitja*, his death and his transformation, first into *Laitjun*, then into the white-barked eucalyptus tree at Blue Mud Bay. In panel *a*, the aborigines of Blue Mud Bay are spearing *Banaitja*. He is carrying his spear-thrower, but has no designs painted on his body. The group of short lines

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[55] The aborigines of Yirrkalla used a similar paper-bark bundle during the non-secret totemic rituals of the circumcision ceremony which, they told me, was similar to that used in the *Banaitja Laitjun* ceremony. These bundles were identical with the *alukara* (Pl. 106 c) of the *amaraltja* ceremony of Groote Eylandt. Warner (1937), p. 302, mentions their use in the *dua narra* ceremonies. [778]

Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 31, record that the aborigines, to commemorate *Banaitja*, 'made the "likeness" of Banaitja in paperbark, bound together on a framework of cane.' It would seem likely that the authors, having heard of the bark bundle, *banaitja*, gained a wrong impression of its appearance, and described it without having seen a specimen.

[56] See carved figure, Pl. 135A, B.

[57] This is figured and described on Pl. 135A, B.

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at the lower part of his face represent his beard. In panel *b*, *Banaitja*, with many spears still embedded in him, is under the water of the Duluru-waltjalapa swamp. His body is already covered with the special designs which, later, he showed to the *jiritja* groups of north-eastern Arnhem Land. In panel *c*, *Banaitja*, now *Laitjun*, is showing those designs to the assembled *jiritja* tribesmen. To the right of *Laitjun* is the eucalyptus tree, upside-down, into which he later transformed himself. The other five figures in the same panel are those of aborigines beating the ground with the *banaitja* bundles of paper-bark. The cross-hatching to the right of *Laitjun* is the dust that rises when the aborigines beat the ground with the *banaitjas*.

Plate 88B is a painting of *Laitjun*. The designs on his body are those belonging to the *dalwongu* language group (*mata*) whose land is at Blue Mud Bay. He is wearing a sacred bag around his neck and feathered bands on his arms.

Plate 89C deals with three mythical men of the *jiritja* moiety, among them being *Laitjun*. Their names are, *a*, *Kalparimu*; *b*, *Barama*, *c*, *Laitjun*. The zigzag lines joining the heads of the men together, at the feet of *a* and between *a* and *b*, depict the hair and *jiritja* string ornaments worn by the three men. The designs between *b* and *c* and to the right of *c* are those which were painted on the back of the men. Because the artist could not show the designs on the back of the figures, he has painted them alongside. The same design, which belongs to the *mangalili mata* of Blue Mud Bay, is repeated on the lower panel.

At the feet of *Barama*, *b*, is the triangular ceremonial ground[58] in which these three men conducted their sacred rituals. This painting deals with only a fragment of the *Laitjun* myth.

Tjambuwal, the Thunder-man

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The thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*, is an important ancestor of the *dua* moiety of the Yirrkalla aborigines. *Tjambuwal* is the creator not only of the clouds, the storms and the thunder, but also of the little *dua* spirit children, *jurtu*, who descend from the sky in the raindrops to become human beings.

In the early days of the world *Tjambuwal* was a giant who lived at Waranaka, an island east of the Wessel Islands. One day, as he was sitting in the shade, *Tjambuwal* saw, in the distance, a Malay prau approaching his island. Annoyed at the intrusion, he waded into the sea and, taking hold of the boat, started to pull it to land. But the Malays attacked *Tjambuwal* with a large knife, cut off both his hands, turned the boat about and sailed for home. *Tjambuwal's* hands, however, joined miraculously to his body, and soon he was again in pursuit. That time he succeeded in pulling the prau to shore and was preparing to smash it in pieces when the crew again attacked him, this time amputating his forearms. Although his arms, like his hands, joined miraculously to his body,

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[58] A triangular ceremonial ground is used by the aborigines of Milingimbi in the *djungguan* ceremonies. Warner (1937), p. 265.

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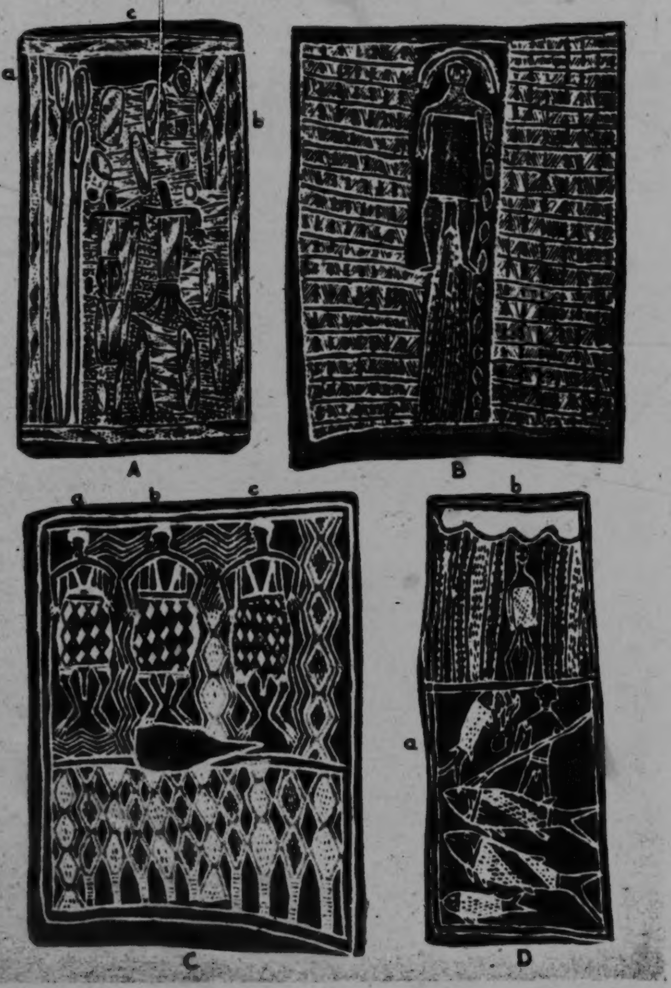

PLATE 89. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A Tjambuwal at Arnhem Bay
B Boingo at Wulwulwi
C Kalparimu, Barama and Laitjun
D Tjambuwal and Maijaunguri at Jalboa

776 *773 *Tjambuwal* felt so ill from his wounds that he left the stranded prau on the beach, lay down in his camp and went to sleep.

During the night tide the Malays launched their boat and by the time *Tjambuwal* woke up in the morning were actually within sight of their homeland. When the thunder-man saw that his enemies had again escaped him, he was furious. Stretching himself to his full height, for he was a very tall man, and seeing the Malay prau far away in the distance, he pushed his way through the water at even greater speed than before, the waves which formed in front of him almost swamping the prau. *Tjambuwal* succeeded in pulling the prau back once more to Waranaka, even though the crew threw out their anchor to retard his progress and paddled strongly in the opposite direction. However, before *Tjambuwal* was able to destroy their boat the Malays succeeded in fatally wounding him by cutting off both of his arms at the shoulders. As *Tjambuwal* lay dying on the beach he called out in a voice of thunder:

'Listen to what I say. When I die I will go into the sky; you will always hear my voice in the storms.'

776 *773 821 *532 From that time onward *Tjambuwal* has lived in the clouds. When, at the beginning of the wet season, the clouds on which he travels reach a point of land called Jalboa, about three miles north-west of Yirrkalla, they get lower and lower until the thunder-man is able to throw a double-ended club, *burununda*,[59] at the cliff, which, as it strikes, shatters the rock, then breaks in many pieces. These pieces enter the ground and become edible yams, called *bualku*.[60] Almost immediately afterwards the thunder-man urinates and, as the urine falls down an adjacent cliff, it cuts a series of parallel meandering lines in the rock. *Tjambuwal* then picks up a number of white stones, *milarik* (once hailstones) which are lying at the base of the cliff[61] and throws them into the sky. These stones quickly grow in size and become large thunder-clouds, on the top of which *Tjambuwal* rides from place to place. As the storm develops the thunder-man, with another double-ended club, similar to the *burununda*, creates black rain clouds. The aborigines say that the thunder from the cumulus clouds is the voice of *Tjambuwal* and the banner of rain which falls from the base of a thunderstorm is his penis.[62]

Within the rain clouds *Tjambuwal* places many spirit children, *jurtu*. These little creatures descend in the raindrops into the sea and enter the bodies of either the *dua* fish or green turtles, or if on the land, the nests of *dua* wild honey and other foods.[63] Sometimes when *Tjambuwal* is sailing along on the top of the clouds he sees the rock cod, *akurata*, in the sea below. From his high place *Tjambuwal* transfixes the fish with his spear, *larapan*,[64] then descends into the sea and kills it with his club, *barlait*. The stench from the decaying fish, rising into the air, causes more rain clouds to form.

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[59] Pl. 130D.
[60] Pl. 131F.
[61] Pl. 91F.
[62] See carved figure of *Tjambuwal*, Pl. 130A, B.
[63] The spirit children of *Tjambuwal* will only live on the land or sea foods belonging to the *dua* moiety.
[64] Pl. 130J.

The aborigines produced seven bark paintings, two carved and painted figures 776 and five ceremonial objects which belonged to the myth of *Tjambuwal*.[65] 773*

Plate 90A illustrates the myth of *Tjambuwal* and the prau of the Malays. In the upper right-hand panel is the Malay prau with the characteristic tripod mast 532* and curious projections from the bow. Within the prau are five men, one of whom, with a large knife, is amputating the arms of *Tjambuwal* (lower right panel). The groups of curving parallel lines round *Tjambuwal's* arms represent the sea-water that was stained by the blood which poured from his wounds. Similar groups of lines round the body of *Tjambuwal* (lower right) are the waves rising in front of his legs as he waded after the prau.

In the upper left-hand panel the main design is a Malay anchor made of wood and shod with metal. This is the anchor the Malays threw overboard to hinder the progress of the prau as *Tjambuwal* dragged it to shore. The vertical parallel lines in this panel represent rain falling from the clouds above (triangular patterns). The lower left-hand panel pictures the injured *Tjambuwal* with his arms cut off at the shoulders. Round him are the curving clouds, *wulmu*, usually associated with the thunder-man.[66]

Plate 90B is the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*.[67] In one hand is the spear, *larapan* (Pl. 130J) he used to capture the rock cod, *akurata*, and in the other his club, *barlait* (Pl. 130C) with which he killed it. The curving lines over the ancestor's head are clouds called *wulmu*. On the right, the clouds are pouring rain upon the earth, and on the left are the 'pink' clouds which, the aborigines say, form in the sky when the rain is finished.

Plate 90C shows *Tjambuwal* holding above his head the spear thrown to kill the rock cod. When a meteor speeds across the sky the aborigines believe [821] that *Tjambuwal* has thrown his spear, and that the fiery trail of the meteor is its path. The shaft of the spear is curved to represent the path of the meteor.

Plate 90D deals with the green turtle, *gariwa*, the storm clouds and the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*.[68] In panels *a* and *b* are two green (*dua*) turtles in the sea-weed (shown by curving lines of cross-hatching). The crescent-shaped designs in the panels on the left of the turtles are waves beating against each other, and those on the right, rough seas breaking on a reef of rocks, indicated by the central cross-hatched panel, *c*. On the upper right-hand panel, *d* symbolizes a large rain cloud, while below it are several thunder-men who have come down from the cloud; rain is still falling from their feet (shown as vertical parallel lines). In their left hands the thunder-men hold the club, *barlait*, and in their right the spear, *larapan*, with which they have transfixed the rock cod, *akurata*. They are holding the rock cod in the sky on the ends of their spears. Immediately to the left of the figures of *Tjambuwal* is a double-ended club, *burunnunda*, and a spear.

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[65] The carved and painted objects are described in Part 5.

[66] See also bark paintings, Pl. 90B, D.

[67] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

[68] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

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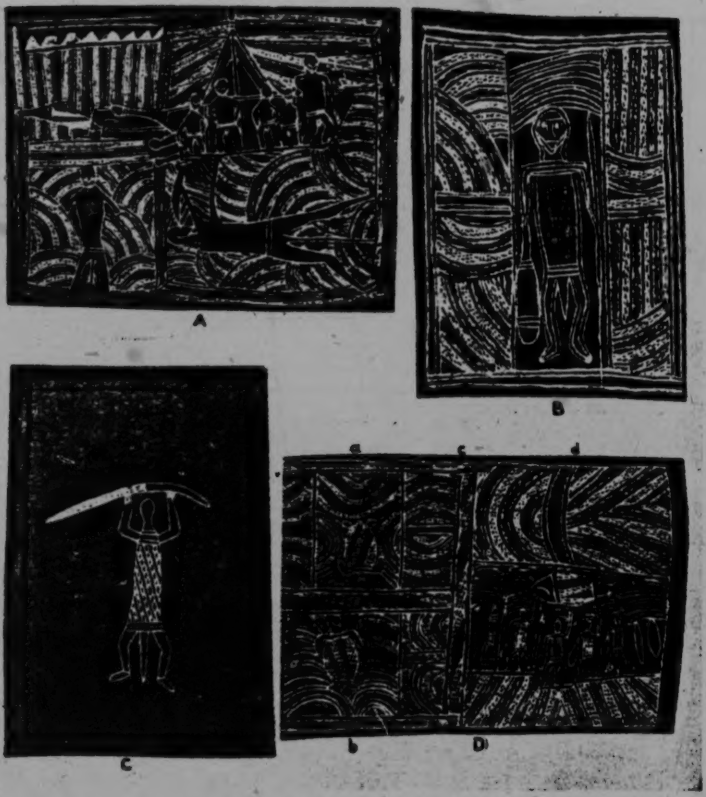

PLATE 90. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A Tjambuwal and the Malays
B Tjambuwal
C Tjambuwal and his spear, larapan
D Tjambuwal and the rock cod

The Totemic Place, Jalboa, of the Thunder-man, Tjambuwal

About four miles north-west of Yirrkalla is a short headland, from the point 773*
of which a small reef extends into the sea. This headland, called Jalboa, is the 776
totem place of the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal* (Fig. 57). 133

On its southern end the distorted rock strata of the cliff have formed into a 823
number of more or less vertical irregular gutters which, according to the myth, are made when *Tjambuwal* urinates. On the point of the cliff about fifty yards to the north are the rocks which are shattered by *Tjambuwal* (Pl. 91E) when he strikes them with his club, *burununda*, and on its slopes a number of white stones, *milarik* (Pl. 91F). It is these, or the spirits of them, which *Tjambuwal* throws into the sky to make thunder-clouds.[69]

On the adjacent beach are two small casuarina trees (Pl. 91A), once the bodies of *Tjambuwal* and his relatives. Not far from these casuarinas is a large fig tree (Pl. 91B), the transformed body of another of *Tjambuwal's* relatives. The fruit [778]
of this fig tree is sacred, as indeed is the whole area at the base of the cliff. No one would dare to eat that fruit, for he would surely die, nor would he dig for ochre in the base of the cliff for, if he did, *Tjambuwal* would kill him. Should the women even look at the place where *Tjambuwal* urinated they must [783]
atone for their misdeeds by a gift of food to the members of the thunder-man's totem. If not, *Tjambuwal* will make them ill.

The Thunder-man, Bolngo (or Tjambuwal) at Wulwulwi, Koolatong River

This version of the *Tjambuwal* myth places the totemic site at Wulwulwi, 773*
on the Koolatong River. The myth differs slightly in detail, but not in general 776
form, from that at Yirrkalla; *Tjambuwal* becomes *Bolngo*;[70] the looped clouds, 184
wulmu, become *djalijal*; and *Bolngo* urinates from a high tree,[71] instead of, as 532*
in the *Tjambuwal* myth, from the clouds.[72]

On the middle panel of Pl. 89B is *Bolngo* urinating on the ground beneath. This urine later rises into the sky and becomes rain. There is a line of hailstones, *milarik* (shown as ovals) to the right of *Bolngo*, and looped clouds, *djalijal*, above his head. The series of squares[73] on either side of *Bolngo* symbolize the open sea near Wulwulwi.

The Thunder-man, Tjambuwal, at Naitjulma, Arnhem Bay

When the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*, was camped at Naitjulma, Arnhem Bay, 773*
two of his sons died and their bodies were transformed into white stones, called 776
milarik or *jarambai*. At the beginning of the wet season the thunder-man throws

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[69] See bark painting of *Bolngo* Pl. 89B.

[70] Elkin and the Berndts (1950, p. 11) refer to the thunder-man under the name of Bulugu.

[71] See myth of Bolngo and carved pipe, p. 393.

[72] See myth of *Tjambuwal*, p. 282.

[73] This is the design belonging to the *dua tjapu mala* of Caledon Bay language group (Fig. 63A).

[text continues on p. 289]

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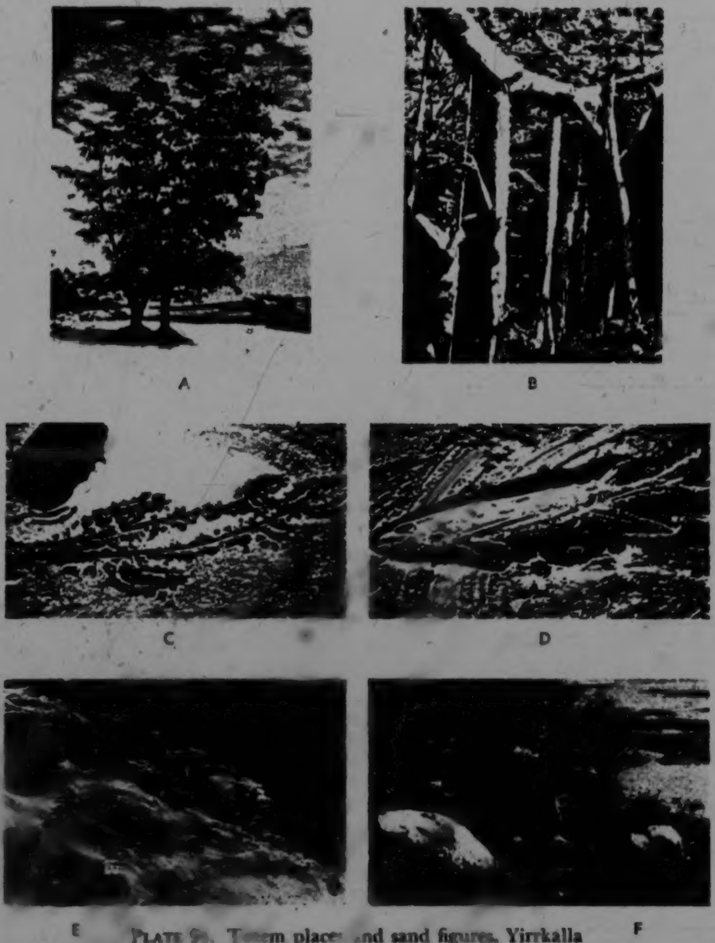

Plate 9[illegible]. Totem places and sand figures, Yirrkalla

A Casuarina tree, Jalboa
B Fig tree, Jalboa
C Sand drawing, goanna
D Sand figure, fish
E Cliff at Jalboa
F White stones, milarik, Jalboa

these stones (or their spirits) into the sky, so that they will become cumulus 773*
clouds in which he can travel from place to place.[74] The thunder-man also 776
throws his spear, *larapan*, at the rock cod, *akurata*, and kills the fish. But instead
of eating it he allows it to become putrid, so that the stench will rise into the [821]
sky and create more rain clouds.[75]

The two figures on Pl. 89A are the dead sons of *Tjambuwal*, whose bodies 773*
were transformed into the white stones, *milarik* (cross-hatched ovals). The 776
parallel black lines at the left-hand edge are the spears, *larapan*, used by
Tjambuwal to transfix the rock cod (the three cross-hatched ovals at *a*). The 532*
pear-shaped figure at *b* is the yam *bawal*,[76] the food of *Tjambuwal*. The black area at *c* is a rain cloud formed from the stench of the decaying rock cod.

The Thunder-man, Tjambuwal, and the Man, Maijaunguri, at Jalboa

One day a mythical man, *Maijaunguri*, went fishing along the coast near the 773*
totemic place, Jalboa, of the thunder-man and speared many rock cod; *akurata*. 532*
He returned to his camp, made a fire and put on the fish to cook. The smoke and the odour of the cooking fish, ascending into the sky, attracted the attention of *Tjambuwal*, who happened to be passing in a cumulus cloud. On looking down he saw that *Maijaunguri* had speared and was cooking a fish which, belonging only to him, was forbidden all other people. *Tjambuwal*, angry over the outrage, created a rain-storm to extinguish the fire, then descended from the clouds and killed the offender with his club, *barlait*.[77]

Plate 89D illustrates the myth of the mythical man, *Maijaunguri*, and the rock cod. In the bottom panel is the man spearing the fish, which he has placed on the fire, *a*. In the top panel is *Tjambuwal*. Above him at *b* is the large cloud in which he was travelling when he smelt the odour of the cooking fish. The cross-hatched vertical panels on either side of the thunder-man represent the sky and broken clouds.

Oijal and his Sister, Neri-neri

In the early days of the world *Oijal* and his sister, *Neri-neri*, travelled along 773*
the western coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria and through north-eastern Arnhem Land, creating many rivers and other natural features.

When camping at Dimbuka, near Blue Mud Bay, the brother and sister made several honey baskets. Then, taking a stone-headed spear, a spear-thrower and a stone axe, they set out to find a nest of the *dua* male wild honey, *jarapang*. By following a bee flying towards its home, they located a hive in a hollow tree near Trial Bay. *Oijal* and *Neri-neri* cut the tree down and, splitting it open,

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[74] The aborigines believe that there is a thunder-man in every cumulus cloud, even those [821]
which form on the top of the smoke of a bush fire.

[75] In the *jiritja* myth of *Waikinba*, rotting fish left behind by the mythical man caused the thunder-clouds to form (p. 286).

[76] See Pl. 131F for the illustration of this yam, called *bualku* at Yirrkalla.

[77] See the club, *barlait*, Pl. 130C.

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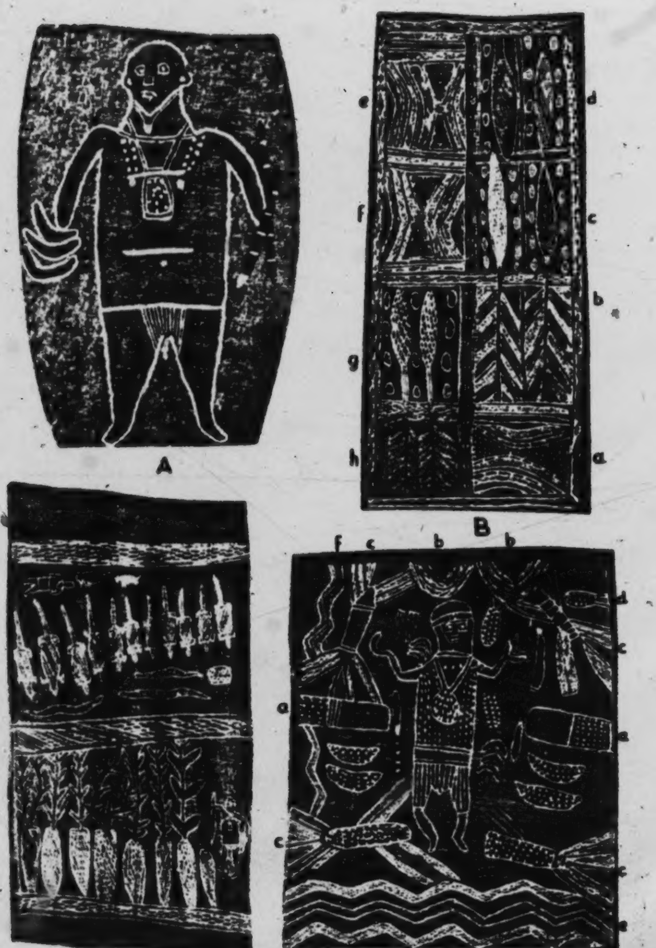
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PLATE 92. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla
A Oijal B Oijal and the yams C Oijal and Neri-neri
D Oijal and Neri-neri at Melville Bay

took from the hive so much wax, bee bread (the pupae of bees) and honey that 773* it filled one of the honey baskets. The place where the tree fell is now the freshwater stream, Gurakawi, which runs into Trial Bay.

Again the brother and sister walked northwards, this time searching for the *dua* female wild honey, *liruwar*. Near Caledon Bay they again followed a bee to its hive and, after cutting down the tree, filled another honey basket. The depression made by the fallen tree has since become the Mandarauik River. Still searching for honey, the brother and sister saw many bees near Port Bradshaw but were unable to locate the hive, because the bees, instead of flying to and from their nest, were drinking at a spring. The next bee led them on a long journey from Caledon Bay, cross-country, to Cape Wilberforce, where the contents of a particularly large hive at Jaraua, near Melville Bay, filled many [537] baskets. Again, the tree they felled created a watercourse, this time the Wandaraui River.[78]

As *Oijal* and *Neri-neri* were pounding the comb to extract the honey, the sound attracted the attention of a lizard-man. Seeing the brother and sister had collected so much honey, he asked for some and they willingly gave it to him. But as the lizard-man was eating the honey a fragment of stick caught in his throat, causing him to cough and almost choke. For a long time he tried unsuccessfully to extract the stick, then, in disgust, he changed himself into a [825] blanket-lizard, *baltjira* (*Chamydosaurus kingii*). The aborigines say that the stick, now a thin bone, is still in the throat of the lizard.

After that incident *Oijal* and *Neri-neri* went to a group of large caves near Melville Bay and started to cook the wild honey in a large bark dish.[79] While they were engaged in the task an ancestral man, *Wulangini*, was cooking fish at Port Bradshaw. On seeing the large amount of honey the brother and sister were preparing he held up his fish to show what he was cooking, hoping that *Oijal* would offer him some honey in exchange. But *Oijal* insulted *Wulangini* by saying that he did not want his fish; honey was much better food.

After the honey was cooked, *Oijal* and his sister went into the caves, where they have lived ever since. No aboriginal will go near the locality, for fear of *Oijal*, who would cripple him by breaking his legs with boomerangs, then spear but not kill him. *Oijal* would then put the wounded aboriginal in a bark dish, take him into his cave, pound his shins with a stone until they were bent like a boomerang, then starve him to death.

The spirit of such a man, unlike those of other aborigines, does not go to [775] the aborigines' heaven, but lives in the forest until able to enter the body of some woman. When born that child will develop boomerang shins.[80]

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[222]

[78] See engraved smoking pipe, Fig. 62B.

[79] Some kinds of honey, when first taken from the hive, burn the throat. After this 'hot' [252] honey, called *bilku*, is cooked by heating it for a while in a bark dish resting in the hot sand and ashes of the camp fire, it becomes much milder in flavour. Cooked honey is *baluwun*.

[80] The shins of some aborigines are curved and flattened like a boomerang. This is [164] caused by the tropical disease of yaws.

*773 *532 Four bark paintings and an engraved smoking pipe[81] deal with the myth of *Oijal* and *Neri-neri.*

Plate 92A is the ancestor *Oijal.* He is carrying his stone-headed spear and spear-thrower in one hand, three boomerangs, *kunilili,* in the other, a spirit bag[82] round his neck and an opossum string pubic apron. The transverse bars across his chest and abdomen are body scars and the band round his neck, as well as the V-shaped line of dots on his chest, are painted body decorations.

In the bark painting, Pl. 92D, the story of *Oijal* and his sister in their caves at Melville Bay is illustrated in considerable detail. *Oijal,* the central figure, carries a boomerang in his left hand and two boomerangs, a stone-headed spear and a spear-thrower in his right. Groups of three boomerangs are shown to the left of his head and the right of his thigh. Another stone-headed spear is immediately to the left. The caves in which *Oijal* and his sister now live are indicated by two crescents, *b, b,* on the upper edge. The two designs, *a, a,* on the right and left-hand edge of the painting are totemic rocks near the caves. Hanging from the right-hand crescent, *b,* from the right arm of *Oijal* and in the extreme upper right at *d* are three of the baskets which *Oijal* and *Neri-neri* filled with honey. The four dotted semi-circular designs below, *a, a,* are the bark dishes in which the ancestors cooked their honey at Melville Bay. Wandarani River, near Melville Bay, made when the ancestors felled the tree, is represented by the zigzag cross-hatched lines at *e* on the lower edge. A similar design, *f,* upper left, is a tributary of Wandarani River. Cabbage palms, *c, c, c, c,* grow near the caves of *Oijal.*

In Pl. 92B the panels *a, e* and *f* are the boomerangs belonging to *Oijal* and *b, h,* the foliage of some unidentified edible tuber, the tubers being shown on panels *c, d* and *g.* The dots on either side of the tubers are small stones on the ground. The central parallel vertical lines represent a track showing many wallaby footprints.

The upper part of this bark painting, Pl. 92C, deals with the man, *Oijal,* at Trial Bay and his day's catch of three snakes and eleven goannas. There is also a number of snake eggs in a basket made from the leaves of the cabbage palm (rectangle, lower right). *Oijal,* with his two hunting dogs, is on the upper left. The central cross-hatched transverse band is a stream at Trial Bay. On the bottom panel are the food-gathering efforts of his sister, *Neri-neri.* She is pictured on the right, digging stick in hand, a large carrying-basket over her shoulder and a small one round her neck. During the day she collected a number of edible yams.

An Aboriginal's Visit to the Land of the Malays

177 *773 *532 648 This painting describes a visit of a *jiritja* man, *Amalatja,* to the land of the Malay trepangers, who, during last century, periodically visited the coast of

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[81] This is described elsewhere (Fig. 62B, p. 296).

[778] [82] The spirit bag worn by the medicine man gives him greater power in healing or magic, because of the totemic spirits which live in it. See Warner (1937), p. 179; also p. 40.

Arnhem Land. The painting was made by *Amalatja*'s son, *Mungarani*, to whom 773*
his father had related his experiences. When the old man, *Amalatja*, was wander- 532*
ing round a village called Jumaina[83] on one occasion he saw women making 648
calico (cloth) by putting two bamboos in the ground and stringing cotton thread 177
between them, obviously a native loom. They shook the bamboos, and made a hammering noise (possibly either the sound of the shuttle or the beating of the thread in place), and 'calico' came off. These same women, called *Jubara*,[84] also collected the rice from the fields.

One day he saw a bandit, or a robber, called *Wurumu*, burn down the house of one of the weavers, apparently a raid. *Mungarani* said that his father, who was puzzled about this outrage, thought that perhaps *Wurumu* did not like the sound of the women making calico.

In the bottom of the painting, Pl. 93A, is *Mungarani's* picture of the Macassan women weaving. The women are shaking the bamboo handles by which *Mungarani's* father believed they made the calico (cloth). The cloth on each loom is a different colour. In panel *c*, one of the weavers is standing on the raised floor of a house under which the fowls are resting (right-hand edge), and in the upper central panel, *b*, *Wurumu* is striking a light to burn down the house. The cross-hatched upper left panel, *a*, is the smoke from the blazing house, and the band on the upper edge, a cliff behind the women's residence.

Three Mythical Men and a Bush-fire, Caledon Bay

Three men, *Wirili*,[85] *Wureri* and *Balang-altji*, among many others, once 773*
performed a sacred *jiritja* ceremony near the Gaimmani River, which runs into 532*
the sea between Caledon and Trial Bays. The camp fires of these men, through not being properly attended, started a bush-fire which spread over a wide area, destroying the trees, the animals and even the men who took part in the ceremony. The fire also burnt out the nest of the bandicoot, *waint-kuia*, and so frightened a hive of wild bees in a nearby swamp that they flew to Milingimbi to escape the danger. The men of the ceremony are now large white-barked eucalyptus trees, *gurari*, and the place of the bees, the Matamatani swamp, is now filled with large paper-bark trees.

Two bark paintings deal with the ceremony and the fire.

Plate 93B pictures three men, *a*, *Wirili*, *b*, *Wureri*, and *c*, *Balang-altji*, standing in the *jiritja* ceremonial ground, near the Gaimmani River. The camps of the performers are indicated by the five dark-coloured squares at *d*. It was from one of the lower of these camps that the bush-fire originated. The series of lozenges below the ceremonial ground, to the left of the men, and completely

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[83] This is supposed to be the home of the *Baijini*, p. 333. The later generations of aborigines, knowing of Jumaina, may have attached it to the *Baijini* myth.

[84] See carved figure of *Jubara*, Pl. 137A, B.

[85] *Wirili* is also associated with the lizard, *bijr*, and the deposit of yellow ochre at Caurunga.

*773 *532 filling the panel *e*, symbolizes the bush-fire.[86] They also represent the white-barked eucalyptus trees, *guruti*, once the men who took part in the ceremony. On panel *f* are the paper-bark trees of the Matamatani swamp, and on panel *g* the hive of wild bees which escaped to Milingimbi. The diamonds indicate the paper-bark trees at Matamatani.[87]

Plate 93D is another representation of the bush-fire on the Gainmani River. On the two lower panels are nine camp-fires, the circles representing the fire and radiating cross-hatched lines the logs of wood on the fire. The two large circles, with a human figure inside, are bark huts, each having a camp-fire at the entrance. The parallel cross-hatched bands at *a* represent a stack of firewood, the longitudinal band, *b*, the Gainmani River and the cross-hatched band, *c*, a nearby range of hills. The area destroyed by the fire is represented by the two upper panels, the curving parallel lines to the left being a tributary of the Gainmani River.

Aborigines Gathering Eggs of Sea-birds

[222] This painting deals with the time when two groups of aborigines, in their canoes, went to an island where the sea-birds nested. They gathered many eggs and brought them back to camp.

Plate 93C illustrates some of the incidents of that journey. The left-hand panel is the island covered with nesting sea-birds. The birds on the left are sitting on their eggs, while those on the right adjacent to two men are in flight. The numerous white dots are eggs. On the left-hand side, near some of the nests, are fish which the birds have brought in to feed their young. On the right are two canoes, loaded to the gunwale with eggs (white dots). The two rectangular cross-hatched areas in this panel represent rough water which almost swamped the canoes. The three dolphins, lower right, were seen on the outward journey.

The Man, Walanwanga, at Garawinu Island

During creation times a mythical *dua* man lived on a small island, Garawinu, east of Woodah Island.

[136] *Walanwanga*, who was skilled in fishing and hunting, was successful in capturing many dolphins, fish, water-snakes and green turtles. Since that time, there has always been an abundance of those creatures at Garawinu Island.[88]

On the upper and lower panels of Pl. 94A are five dolphins, *indjapana*, and between them three water-snakes, *jalu*; the small fish are unidentified. In the central panel are five green turtles, *gariwa*. The ovals above and below are rocks that project from the sea, the haunt of many green turtles, and the transverse lines, *a* and *b*, reefs of rock outside Garawinu Island.

[302 881]

[86] The design of the *gumaitj mata* of Caledon Bay. Fig. 63M. The same fire symbol was painted in the body of an initiate during a circumcision ceremony at Yirrkalla. Pl. 129C.

[87] The design of the *dalwongu mata* of Blue Mud Bay. Fig. 63J.

[88] This is a parallel myth to that of the *jiritja* island of Garabi, off the coast of Port Bradshaw, p. 378.

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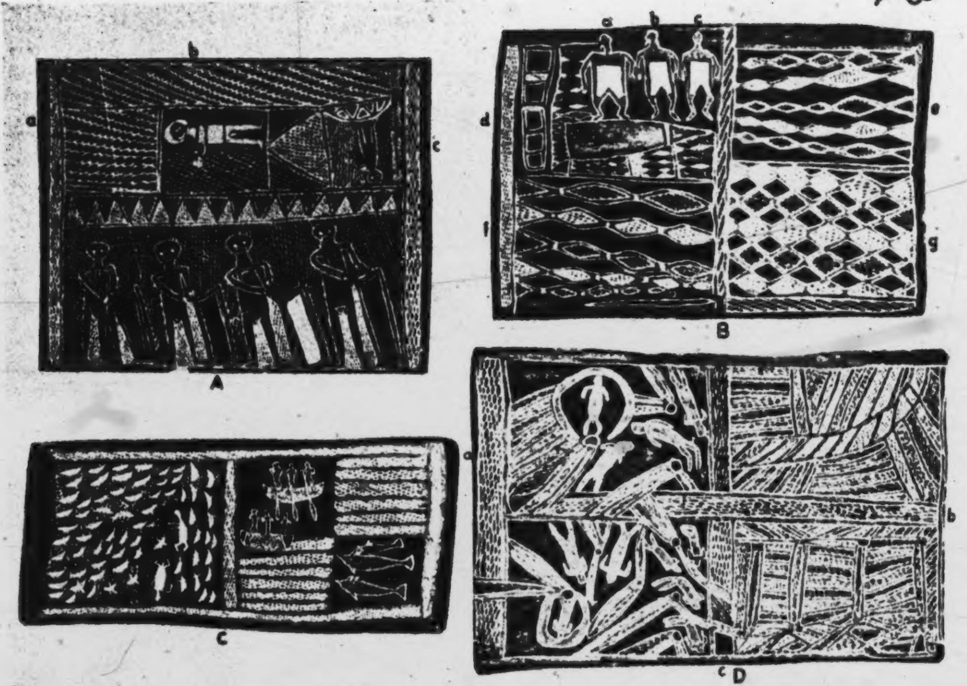
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Plate 93. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A Malay women weaving B, D Three men and the bush-fire C, Aborigines gathering sea-gull eggs

The Man, Waikinbu, at Cape Shield

*773 *532 [821] At Cape Shield, during mythical times, a *jiritja* man, *Waikinbu*, speared two large fish in a nearby lagoon. He cooked them, had a very large meal, then lay down in the shade of the trees to sleep off the effects, leaving the fish beside the camp-fire. But he slept so long that the fish, becoming fly-blown and putrid, created such a stench that heavy thunder-clouds formed over the top of them.[89]

The long ellipse, Pl. 94B, is the lagoon at Cape Shield in which *Waikinbu*, lower right, speared the two fish. The design across the centre of the ellipse is the camp-fire where *Waikinbu* cooked his catch, and at *a* is the tree under which he went to sleep. The short strokes on the periphery of the ellipse represent the maggots from the decaying fish travelling away from it in long lines. At *b* and *c* are the tracks of the *gunjun* crabs leaving their holes to eat the fish. When *Waikinbu* woke and looked up into the sky he saw that three thunderstorms, *d*, *d*, *d*, had formed in the sky over the putrid fish. The boomerang shapes indicate small stratus clouds which form underneath the thunderstorms.

The central ellipse of the painting is now an extensive lagoon and the tracks of the maggots and of the crabs are lines of sand-hills close to the shore.

The Rain-makers, Wuluwait and Bunbulama

*773 989 *532 When the mythical people *Wuluwait*, the man, and *Bunbulama*, the woman, wanted rain they tied bundles of water-grass together and soaked them in the swamp. The aborigines still follow a similar practice. After the bundles have been in the water for a day or more, clouds begin to form. In a short time the rain not only falls but continues to do so as long as the rain-making bundles are left in the swamp.

The figures in Pl. 94C are the rain-makers, *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*,[90] with the magic bundles in their hands. Above them is a rainbow, with the rain, vertical cross-hatched panels, falling from it. The black space between the rain symbols is a gap in the storm. The hair radiating from the heads of the rain-makers is also associated with rain, one informant stating that, instead of hair, the water-grass used to make up the rain-making bundles grew from the heads of the mythical people. On the bottom edge of the painting, reading from the left, the first two cone-like figures are rocks and the last three, termite mounds associated with the totem place of the rain-makers. The vertical lines on the sides represent falling rain. Rain is also pouring from the two rain-making bundles.

The Man, Nalili, at Caledon Bay

*773 *532 262 The mythical *jiritja* man, *Nalili*, lived on the sea coast and beside the swamps at Caledon Bay, collecting as food shell-fish, crabs and oysters from among the mangroves, and fruit, yams and animals from the forest and swamps at the rear.

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[89] There is a dua myth of the thunder-man *Tjambuwal* in which the stench of rotting fish caused thunderstorms and rain (Pl. 89D).

[90] See carved wooden figure of woman, *Bunbulama*, Pl. 133A, B, and bark figures of *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*, Fig. 65C, D; also colour plate facing p. 267.

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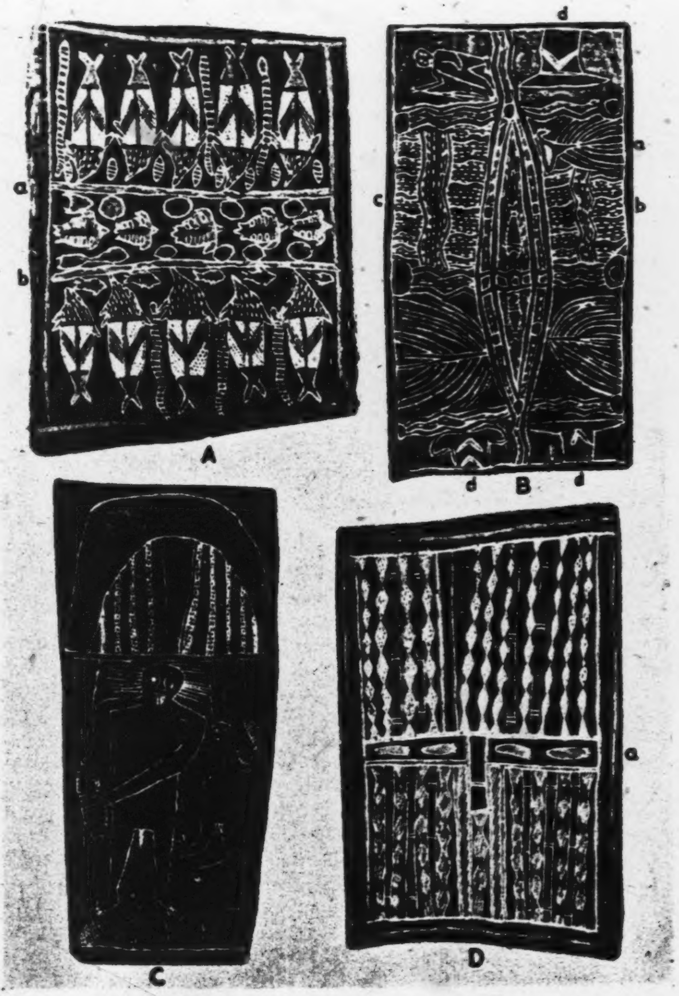

PLATE 94. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A Walanwanga at Garawinu Island
B Waikinbu at Cape Shield
C Wuluwait and Bunbulama, the rain-makers
D Nalili at Caledon Bay

*773 *532 The upper panel of Pl. 91D represents the mangrove swamps, intersected by fresh-water streams, lines of lozenge-shaped designs. The transverse panel, *a*, is the aboriginal path from Port Bradshaw to Caledon Bay, and the footprints those of *Nalili*. The lozenge shapes on the lower panel are salt-water areas, and the parallel lines between, sand-hills on the sea coast.

Nguru-gujameri and his Wife, Njinpili-lingou

At one time a mythical *jiritja* man, *Nguru-gujameri*, and his wife, *Njinpili-lingou*, lived at Djerakoi, near Cape Shield.

One day *Nguru-gujameri* and a companion, *Ikawunga*, were spearing fish in a mangrove swamp when they noticed a number of crab-holes around the base of a tree, and the many tracks made by the creatures as they ran from one hole to another. *Nguru-gujameri* suggested to his companion, *Ikawunga*, that they should make a painting of the crab-holes and the marks of the *gunjun* crabs, so that they could keep the design for themselves.[91] The two men did this, but before they died they showed the design to some young men of their group so [428 424] that the memory of it would not be lost. Since then the design has been passed from father to son. No other aboriginal is allowed to paint these marks without the owner's permission.

Two paintings illustrate the myth of *Nguru-gujameri* and *Njinpili-lingou*.

On Pl. 95A the upper panel pictures the sea and the lower, the land. The overall pattern of the upper panel is the crab-holes and tracks of the crab, *gunjun*, which formed the design mentioned in the myth.

In the right-hand squares are four cormorants, *madu*, in black. One of them is standing on a rock. The two squares on the extreme right contain two parrot-fish which were too large for the cormorants to swallow. The four grey reef herons, *kaulan-witbit*, in the centre and left, lived on the sand-crabs, *gunjun*. In the lower right panels are six emus and three yams, and in the left, five emus and their footprints. The curious sixth design in the left-hand panel is a cockatoo in flight. The emus and cockatoos depicted on the lower panels are the same as those disturbed by the woman, *Njinpili-lingou*.

In the upper right of Pl. 95C, *Nguru-gujameri* is standing on a rock, spearing fish. He has a string of three in his left hand and has transfixed another with the spear held in his right. The narrow cross-hatched vertical band between *Nguru-gujameri* and the upper left panel, *b*, is the tree, mentioned in the myth, around the base of which *Ikawunga* and *Nguru-gujameri* saw the crab-holes. In panel *b* the crab-holes are indicated by dots at the junction of the series of wavy lines, and the marks made in the mud by the feet of the crabs by the many short straight lines. In the lower left-hand corner of the same panel are the holes and tracks made by the *gunjun* crabs.

[424 181] [91] This design, like others in the Yirrkalla series (Fig. 63), belongs exclusively to a language group, or *mala*, of aborigines. This myth explains the origin of one of those designs which has not been identified.

Whereas the upper panels deal with the sea and seashore, the lower two deal with the land. In the central panel is the woman, *Njinpili-lingou*, a bark dish on her head, standing on the top of a sand-dune near Cape Shield. The rectangles on either side of her are nearby sand-dunes. In panel *a* the five cockatoos in flight were disturbed by *Njinpili-lingou*. There are also five emus in the same panel. Their tracks are shown on panel *c*. 773* 532*

The Man, Wanatjai

Plate 95B is the painting of an aboriginal, *Wanatjai*, with a long Malay smoking pipe in each hand.[92] On the upper edge of the painting are four steel axes, and on the left-hand side two steel knives. *Wanatjai* is wearing a belt. On his chest is a design of triangles[93] which he brought back from Macassar with him. [177 276]

The Woman, Malwulwi

In the early times a pregnant ancestral woman, [illegible]*wulwi*, accompanied by a little rat, *nik-nik* (the woman's dog), went into a mangrove swamp at Gunumungu, on the north side of Blue Mud Bay, to collect oysters. While filling her carrying-bag with the oysters, she was swept off her feet by a strong tide. She tried to swim to land, but was drowned because the tide was too strong and she too heavily pregnant. The little rat, *nik-nik*,[94] however, was able to swim to safety. [237]

Malwulwi's body is now a large tree in the mangrove swamps at Gunumungu. On the trunk of this tree there are marks indicating three maximum water levels: spring tides, usual tides and tides when, during the wet season, the fresh-water from the rivers floods the mangrove swamps.[95] [824] [804]

Plate 95D depicts *Malwulwi* in the mangrove swamp at Gunumungu, near Blue Mud Bay, where she used to collect oysters. The cross-hatched panels *a, a*, indicate the fresh-water from the river running among the mangrove trees and meeting the tide coming up from the bay. As mentioned in the myth, when the tide ebbs it leaves dark lines on the trunks of the trees.

Muruma, the Fisherman

In early times *Muruma*, a noted fisherman, lived with his wife beside a stream called Bamui, near the totemic place of Jalboa, north-east of Yirrkalla.

One day *Muruma*, having speared many fish, put them on the fire to cook. He was resting under a tree when one of the *Bukalatji* (enemies of *Muruma*) paid him a visit, saying that he and his wife were hungry, having just paddled all the way from Dambalia (Bremer Island). Little suspecting treachery, *Muruma* gave his cooked fish to the *Bukalatji*, who, after having eaten them, rose to go.

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[92] Interpretation, F. M. Setzler.

[93] This is the same as the *jiritja* cloud symbol of Cape Arnhem (Fig. 63H). It is also present in the art of the Celebes, Fig. 63R.

[94] See bark painting of the rat, *nik-nik*, and *Bourngauwili's* dog, *dulaiwuja*, Pl. 121A.

[95] These marks are indicated on the carved wooden figure of *Malwulwi*, Pl. 133C, D.

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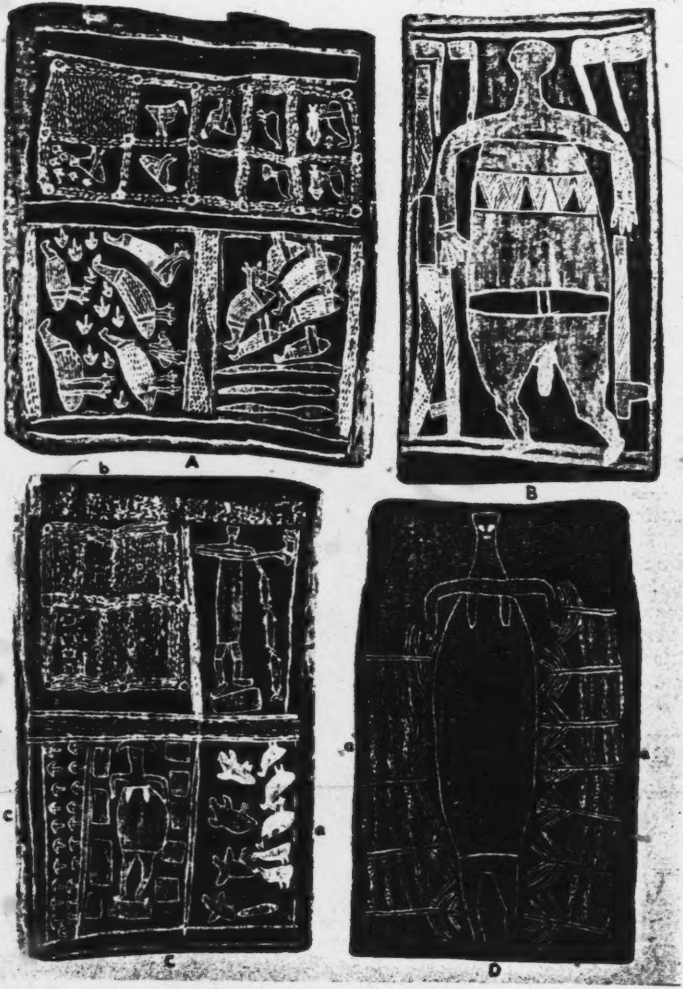

PLATE 95. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, C Nguru-gujameri and Ikawunga at Cape Shield B Wanatjai D Malwulwi

This was a signal for a number of *Bukalatji* men, who were hiding among the 773*
trees, to attack the unsuspecting *Muruma* and spear him to death. His body is 532*
now a rock which projects out of the sea near the shore at Jalboa (map, Fig. 57). [823]

Two bark paintings illustrate the mythical story.

The central figure in Pl. 96A is *Muruma*. In one hand he holds four fish and in the other a twin-barbed fishing spear with which he has transfixed another fish. The crescents above his head and on the left-hand side of the painting represent curious loop-like clouds, *wulmu*.[96] The circles and cones along the right and left-hand edges are also clouds. In the upper part of the painting *Muruma* is asleep under a tree, with the fish (upper left) cooking on the fire, *a*, beside him.*

Plate 96D deals with the death of *Muruma* at the hands of the *Bukalatji*. In the centre is *Muruma* spearing fish and stingrays. In the lower left he is resting by his camp-fire, around which are the fish he is cooking. The *Bukalatji* are grouped along the upper edge. At the right, the unfortunate *Muruma* is being speared by one of the *Bukalatji*. Already there are many spears in his body.

Nakundia and Mununatan

Nakundia and *Mununatan* were two fishermen who once lived at Blue Mud Bay. One day, on returning to their camp after a day's fishing, they were set upon and speared to death by aborigines from a hostile group.

In the lower right panel, *a*, of Pl. 96C are *Nakundia* (lower) and *Mununatan* (upper), both with a large fish in each hand. Above them is their canoe with the sail set. The next two panels to the left are the oval ceremonial grounds, [171]
similar to those used in the *arawaltja* ceremonies of Groote Eylandt (Fig. 6). Still further left is one of the fishermen standing on a rock, shown as an oval beneath his feet, with a fish in each hand. Above him are five fishing lines with hooks and sinkers attached. In the lower left, *b*, of the left-hand lower panel, one man (unidentified) is spearing another (possibly referring to the death of either *Mununatan* or *Nakundia*). There are six spears to the left of this group. The designs on the upper half at *c* are totemic rocks and a palm tree, upper right.

The men responsible for the death of *Nakundia* and *Mununatan* are shown in the central transverse panel *d*, while in the upper left panel, *e*, are the two [411]
dead fishermen transfixed with spears. At the right of the same panel are many 796]
fighting spears of a type used only in avenging ceremonies.

Minjapa and Wuluwil, the Turtle Fishermen

Two mythical fishermen, *Minjapa* and *Wuluwil*, one day captured a large turtle. They brought it into Jalboa, about three miles north-west of Yirrkalla,[97]

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[96] These clouds, *wulmu*, also belong to the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*, Pl. 90D. It is [776
evident that *Muruma* and *Tjambuwal*, both belonging to the *dua* moiety, are associated in the 616]
mythical stories.

* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXVI.

[97] This is also the totemic place of *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man, and *Muruma*, the fisherman.

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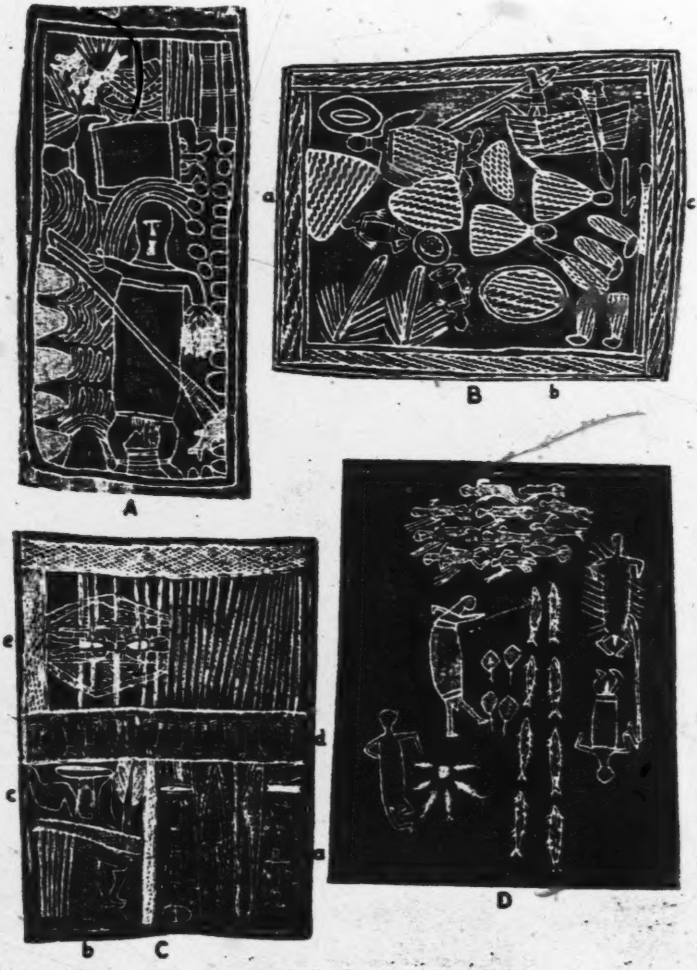

PLATE 96. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A Muruma at Jalboa
B Minjapa and Wuluwil at Jalboa
C Nakundia and Munuratan at Blue Mud Bay
D Muruma and the Bukalatji at Jalboa

and cut it up in the same manner as do the aborigines of today. The fishermen, 773* the canoe and the pieces of turtle meat are now natural features at Jalboa. 532*

In the upper right of the painting, Pl. 96B, *Minjapa* and *Wuluwil* are spearing the turtle. They are shown again seated on either side of a rock, a black circle. Below them are two casuarina trees, Pl. 91A,[98] which grow near the [824] totemic place. The metamorphosed bodies of the two men, *Minjapa* and *Wuluwil*, now the turtle-rock[99] Ai-aika (Pl. 97A), are indicated at *a*, on the outer edge. There is a similar design immediately beneath the turtle. A semi-circular design near the tail of the turtle is the metamorphosed canoe, now a low red rock in the shallow water (Pl. 97C, on the left). The oval *b*, on the lower edge of the painting, is the carapace of the turtle (Pl. 97B). In the lower right are two pieces of flesh, *baiwu*, from the inside of the turtle's front flippers, and above is the club, *barlait*, with which the hunters killed the turtle. Above the carapace are two pieces of meat (more or less triangular figures) from the chest, called *tritiri*. The fat from the creature is indicated by a barred oval on the extreme upper left. The turtle-spear and spear-thrower are on the right-hand edge at *c*. Immediately to the left of them are two more pieces of meat from the inside of the front flipper.

The fishermen, the canoe, and the parts of the dismembered turtle have all 773* been transformed into natural features on the sea-shore at Jalboa. The turtle-rock, Ai-aika (Pl. 97A) is the metamorphosed bodies of the turtle fishermen, 532* *Minjapa* and *Wuluwil*. The canoe is a small low rock on the extreme left (Pl. 823 97C), the carapace (Pl. 97B) and parts of the dismembered turtle (Pl. 97D) large eroded boulders on the coast.

There is hardly a rock or a tree in this locality that is not linked, in one way or another, with either *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man, *Muruma*, the fisher- [776] man, or *Minjapa* and *Wuluwil*, the turtle-fishers.

Tjuna-tjuna, Wururunga and the Bukalatji

Two brothers, *Tjuna-tjuna*[1] and *Wururunga*, were the first people to live on 773* Dambalia (Bremer Island). They were paddling to the mainland in their bark 532* canoe on one occasion when they noticed smoke among the trees and, on sneaking ashore, saw a *Bukalatji* man, *Djunmundia*, asleep by the fire. He was [482] wearing, around his neck, a particularly large carrying-bag.

The brothers said to each other, "This is the man who killed our father last [628] year. We now have our chance to pay him back."[2]

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[98] The same trees as those mentioned in the *Tjambuwal* myth.

[99] The aborigines throw stones on the top of this rock in order to ensure success in catching turtles. [225]

[1] In the myth associated with the two carved heads, Pl. 139D, E, *Tjuna-tjuna* is called *Bauaramin*.

[2] Blood feuds are common in Arnhem Land and the cause of most of the killings. They can, however, be ended at a ceremonial peace-making fight, the *makaraka*. See Warner (1937), p. 174, also the myth of crocodile and stingray and the origin of the first *makaraka*, Pl. 122D. [628]

[text continues on p. 305]

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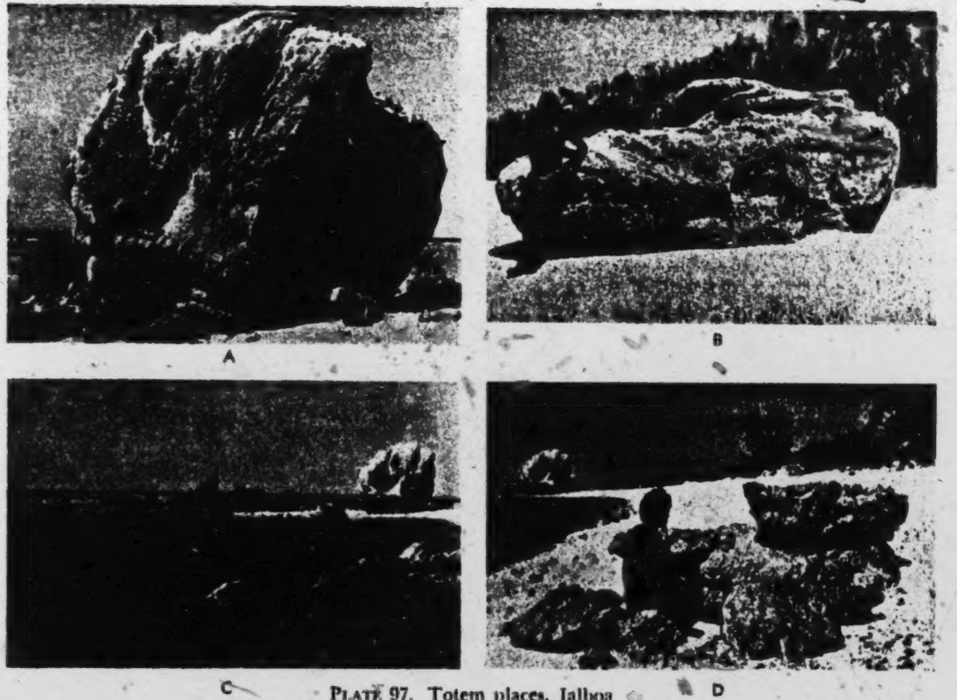

PLATE 97. Totem places, Jalboa

A The turtle rock, Ai-aika
B Totem rocks of turtle carapace
C Totem rock of canoe
D Totem rocks of dismembered turtle

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773*

After performing the dance of the tiger snake, *dunbania*, they each painted the death mark of the snake on their faces[3] and cast their spears at the sleeping [776 man. These passed through both his chest and carrying-bag, killing him instantly. 302]

The two brothers, waiting until the wives of *Djunmundia* returned from 628] food-gathering, captured them and, putting them aboard the canoe, paddled to an island north of Bremer Island. During the night, however, the women escaped, swam to the mainland, and told the *Bukalatji*,[4] relatives of the murdered *Djunmundia*, how their husband had been murdered. When the two brothers discovered their loss they returned to their camp on Bremer Island.

During the next few days the *Bukalatji* worked hard making a number of [501] bark canoes. Waiting until there was no moon, they launched them and paddled to Dambalia. Leaving their canoes to the north of the island, the *Bukalatji* crept through the low scrub to surround and kill *Tjuna-tjuna* and *Wururunga*. But the brothers heard them and, in their flight, came by chance on the bark canoes, [177] which they started to cut to pieces with the large steel knives which the Malays had given them. They had almost finished their work of destruction when the head man of the *Bukalatji* came up and begged them not to destroy his own canoe, so that he could take all of his people home. The brothers relented and allowed the *Bukalatji* to depart.

After some time the two brothers left Bremer Island and went to live near Cape Wilberforce, where they met and married two women from the nearby islands. The wives were out collecting oysters one day when the *Bukalatji* again attacked the brothers and this time succeeded in killing them. This so enraged the women that they attacked the *Bukalatji* with the knives belonging to their husbands and killed them all. *Tjuna-tjuna* and *Wururunga* were then trans- [823] formed into goannas and their camps on Bremer Island into trees. Between those trees there is a path, which must be kept clean by the local aborigines.

On Pl. 98A the two brothers, at *a*, are paddling their canoe to the mainland. On the left, at *b*, they are holding their spear-throwers and avenging spears in their hands. The elder brother, *Tjuna-tjuna*, is on the right. At *c* is their enemy, *Djunmundia*, transfixed by the two avenging spears, one of which has passed through both his chest and his carrying-bag (cross-hatched oval). In the lower right panel *d*, black circles enclosing the goannas are totemic trees mentioned in the myth; the parallel lines, the path between them; and the curves, nearby sand-hills.

The Man, Balonarati, and the Paper-bark Trees of Matamatqui [778

Between Trial and Caledon Bays is a river, Gainmaui. Near this river is the [133 Matamataui swamp,[5] about half a mile across and filled with paper-bark trees. 137]

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[3] The death mark, shown on the carved and painted head of *Bauaramin*, Pl. 139D, E, is painted on the faces of all the men who take part in an avenging ceremony.

[4] These are the mythical people who killed *Muruma*, the fisherman. See Pl. 96D.

[5] This swamp is also mentioned in the myth of the three men and the bush-fire. Pl. 93B.

[text continues on p. 307]

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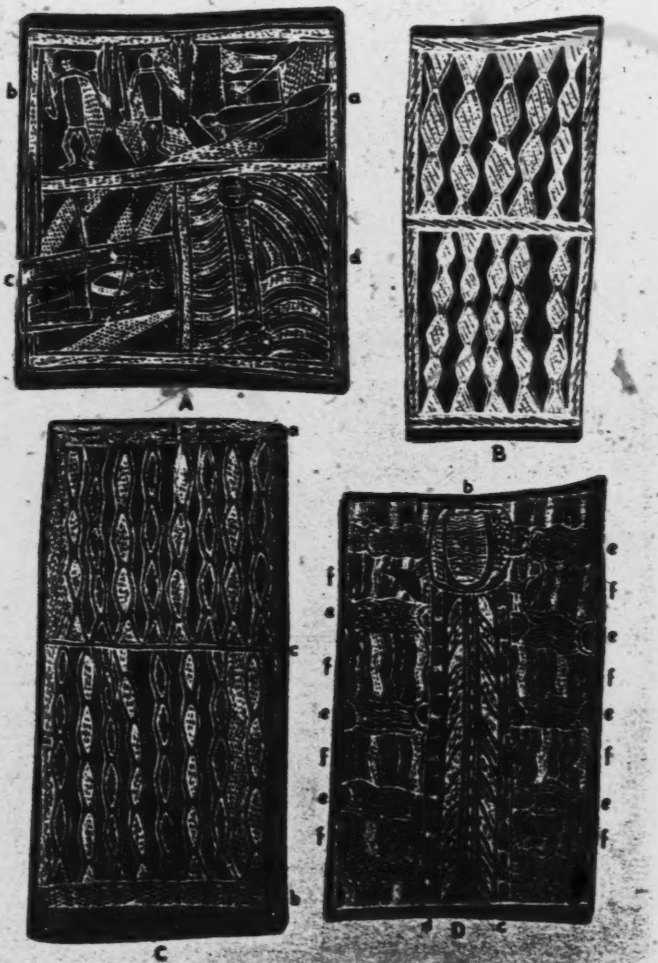
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PLATE 98. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A Tjuna-tjuna, Wururunga and the Bukalatji B, C Balonarati at Matamaṭaui
D Rualko and the turtle, Cape Shield

532*

dulwar. This is the totemic place of the mythical man *Balonarati* and the paper-bark trees. 773* 133 137 778

During the early days of the world *Balonarati* invented the method of preparing *natu* from the fruit of the cycad[6] so that it would be fit for human consumption. *Balonarati* first broke the shells, pounded the kernels into flour, placed the flour in a finely-woven basket and soaked the food for three days in running water to remove the poison. At the end of that time he stripped sheets of paper-bark[7] from the adjacent trees and taking the sodden flour from the water, wrapped it in the paper-bark and allowed it to drain for several hours. After this treatment the flour was ready to eat. *Balonarati's* invention, still in use, ensures a plentiful food supply for the aborigines. The place where the mythical man prepared the cycad flour, *natu*, is now a swamp filled with large paper-bark trees, some of them still bearing the marks where *Balonarati* stripped the bark from them. 773* 532* 252

Two bark paintings, although somewhat similar in design, illustrate different aspects of the same myth. 773*

On Pl. 98C,[8] the transverse bands *a* and *b* are sand-banks on the River Gainmaui, and *c* the main track between the north and the south of Caledon Bay. The lozenges are the paper-bark trees in the swamp, and the dots on the ends of the lozenges, fine white dust in the bark which the wild bees collect and carry to their hives. The cross-hatching indicates the pieces of bark lying about the base of the tree after the stripping is finished. 532*

Plate 98B represents an individual tree at Matamataui. The lozenges on the upper and lower panels indicate places on the trunk from which *Balonarati* had stripped the bark, and the dots, like those on the previous painting, the white dust which the bees take to their hives. The cross-hatched bands surrounding the two panels indicate the upper part of the tree which the mythical man, being unable to reach, could not strip of its bark.

The Man, Rualko, and the Turtle, Muratu-muratu, at Cape Shield

The *jiritja* man *Rualko* lived, during mythical times, on the beach at Cape Shield. He ate only the eggs of turtles and sea-birds.

On Pl. 98D the central panel is the track of the female turtle, *muratu-muratu*, the herring-bone design being the marks she made in the sand as she crawled from the water to lay her eggs. The inner oval at *b* is the sand disturbed by the turtle in the preparation of her nest, and the dots in the outer oval her eggs. On his way to the turtle nest (see footmarks, panel *c*), *Rualko* collected the eggs (dots in panel *c*) which the four black seagulls had laid on the path. His returning footmarks are shown in panel *d*. The horizontal groups of wavy lines *e, e, e*, are the marks made in the sand by the sand-crabs, *gunjun*, and the semicircles

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[6] This fruit is poisonous if eaten in its raw state.

[7] Paper-bark, being particularly soft and flexible, is used for a wide variety of purposes. 314

[8] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

*773 at each end, their holes. Cross-hatched panels *f, f, f,* represent the paths made
*532 by the *gunjun* crabs as they ran from one hole to another.

The turtle track has now been transformed into a group of red and yellow sand-hills and the holes of the *gunjun* crabs into low bushes.

171
(a) THE CONCEPTION BELIEFS

842 Throughout the eastern side of Arnhem Land the aborigines believe the
787 spirit child visits the father in a dream and asks to be directed to his future mother. The sources from which these children spring, however, vary with the different localities.

At Groote Eylandt, the children travel on the winds, those of the *wirrikapara* moiety on the *mamariga* (south-east) wind,[9] and those of the *oranikapara* (equivalent to the *jiritja* on the mainland) on the *bara* (north-east) wind.[10] The little spirit child hides in the grass until it has an opportunity of visiting the father in a dream and asking him for a mother.

At Milingimbi, Warner[11] states, the spirit child, who has been living in the totemic well in the form of a small fish, asks the sleeping father the name of its mother. The father points her out, the child enters her body and starts life as a human being.

184 It was at Yirrkalla, however, that I was able to obtain, through the medium
842 of the bark paintings, a more complete account of the conception beliefs.

616
(i) *The Conception Beliefs of the Dua Moiety of Yirrkalla*

*532 The people of the *dua* moiety believe that when *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man, creates the rain clouds he places in them a number of spirit children, *jurtu*. These *jurtu*, who are so small that only the medicine-men can see them, descend on the raindrops to the land, or the sea. If on the land, the little *jurtu* enter one of the various *dua* yams, fruits, and especially the *dua jarapang* or *liruwar* wild honey; if the *jurtu* falls in the sea, it inhabits the *dua* fish or the green turtles. The little child spirits of *Tjambuwal* will not have anything to do with *jiritja* foods.

One day, as shown in the painting, two men catch a green turtle, bring it to the shore and cut it up so that everyone can have a meal. The cutting up of the
[787] turtle releases the *dua* spirit child living in its body. That night, when everyone is asleep, the spirit child, *jurtu*, visits one of the men in a dream and says:

'You are my father. *Tjambuwal* put me in the turtle you cut up today, so that I could find a mother. Where is she?'

[575] The father points out one of his wives, whom he has been told has ceased menstruating: the child enters her body and starts a terrestrial existence. Next morning the father, if he remembers the dream (the aboriginal men said that it was not often that they did), says to his wife:

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[9] Myth of *mamariga* wind. Pl. 24D.

[10] Myth of *bara* wind. Pl. 24B.

[11] Warner (1937), p. 21.

'Last night a *jurtu* came and asked me for a mother, so I sent it to you.' 184
Within a short time the mother shows signs of pregnancy. 616

In the middle of Pl. 99B is *Tjambuwal*, holding the spirit child, *jurtu*, by 842
the hand. Over his head are the boomerang-shaped clouds, *wulmu*. The groups 532*
of curving cross-hatched panels on the upper edge and the left-hand side of the painting are rain clouds, *b*, the home of the spirit child. On the right-hand side are two men spearing a turtle inhabited by a *jurtu* and on the left a pregnant woman. The curving cross-hatched lines at *a*, on the extreme right of the painting, represent the water disturbed by the wounded creature.

(ii) *The Conception Beliefs of the Jiritja Moiety*

The conception beliefs of the *jiritja* moiety vary somewhat from those of the *dua*. They believe that when a woman ceases to menstruate her blood goes into
the sky and is there changed into a spirit child, *jurtu*. After some time the little [821]
jurtu, desiring an earthly mother, creates a thunderstorm and a rainbow, and, using the raindrops as a vehicle of travel, descends to the earth. If the *jurtu* falls into the sea, it enters some *jiritja* creature such as a dugong, a hawksbill turtle or a queen fish; if on the land, a hive of *jiritja* honey, *kamou* or *barangit*, or the body of some *jiritja* creature. Should the aborigines spear a dugong and find that it is particularly fat, or locate a hive well stocked with honey, they know that the dugong or the hive is inhabited by a spirit child.

When, for example, the dugong is cut open, and the *jurtu* escapes, it visits
the sleeping father and asks him which of his wives is to be his mother. As with [787]
the *dua* moiety, the father points out a wife who has ceased menstruating. The [585]
child enters her body through the vulva. If the father remembers next morning he tells the expectant mother about his dream. Soon afterwards the woman feels the movements of the *jurtu* within her body. As soon as a woman ceases to
menstruate, she must not eat meat or fish. Her diet is limited to grass-seeds, [843
yams, the fruit of the cycad, shell-fish and crabs. 262]

On Pl. 99C the father and pregnant mother are at the upper edge of the painting. On either side of them are large thunder-clouds created by the spirit child, *jurtu*. On the right of the painting is falling rain, parallel lines of cross hatching, and on the extreme left two dugongs; the cross-hatching around them is the sea. The U-shaped symbol is a rainbow created by the little *jurtu*, at the base of which is one who has descended on the raindrops. He is swimming about in the sea, waiting for an opportunity to enter the body of one of the dugongs which, he hopes, will be captured by the men in the canoe.[12] The artist explained that he had made a mistake by not allowing himself enough room to paint the dugong in the canoe with the spirit child inside of it. So he painted the *jurtu* only.

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[12] The *jurtu*, like the *muri* of the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia, are, before they enter the mother, complete, self-directing beings. Mountford and Harvey (1941), p. 159.

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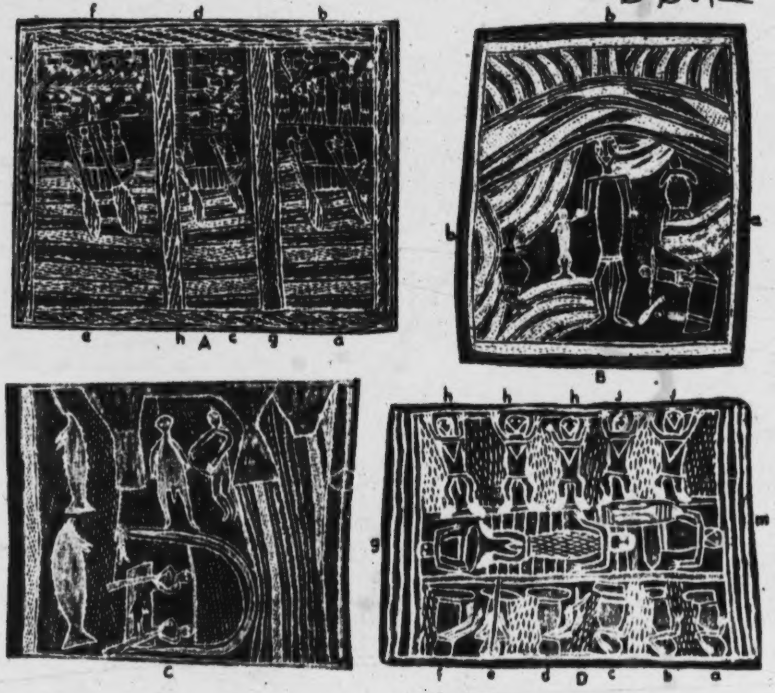
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PLATE 99. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The journey of the dua dead
B Dua conception beliefs
C Jiritja conception beliefs
D Burial, cleansing the bones

THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

(b) DEATH AND BURIAL

There are three important events in the life of every male aboriginal of 844
Arnhem Land—in fact, in the life of any tribalized Australian aboriginal: birth, 881
when he leaves the land of the spirits and enters the every-day world; initiation, 764
when he is admitted into the sacred or ritualistic world, where age makes him
increasingly important; and death, when he leaves the every-day world, and again 561
enters into the land of the spirits.

Although there are few rituals associated with birth, those of initiation and the later age-grading ceremonies are long and complicated, for it is by these ceremonies that men are admitted deeper and deeper into the secret life of the tribe.

At death, the burial rituals extend over many weeks, their purpose being not 764
only to send the spirit so happily to its future home that it will not be a danger [775]
to the living, but also to allow the living to adjust themselves to their loss.

The burial ceremonies at Yirrkalla have three main phases: (i) the ceremonies
at death, (ii) the cleansing of the bones, and (iii) the final burial, after which
the spirit of the dead leaves for its aboriginal 'heaven'. If the dead are of the [616
dua moiety, the spirit goes to Purelko, and if of the *jiritja*, to Nalkuma. 775]

(i) *The Ceremonies at Death*

When a man dies his relatives gather round the dead body, wailing loudly, [152]
the women cutting their scalps with sharpened bones until the blood flows freely.
After a short period of wailing the men form a group apart from the women [533]
and chant the long series of songs which belong to the totemic group of their
dead companion. Next morning the men proceed with the rites of burial, first [302]
by rubbing red ochre over the body of the corpse, and on that painting his
totemic design.[13] The men also make two bark effigies[14] which they put under
the arms of the corpse. They explain to him that the effigies are his children,
whom they have killed and placed beside him to prevent him being lonely and
wishing to return to haunt the living. The corpse is then wrapped in a thick
layer of paper-bark and tied with string.

While all this is being done, other men are erecting a platform of logs about 417
five feet in height and covering it with a layer of leaves. Then, while the men 764
chant another series of totemic songs belonging to the dead man, two aborigines

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[13] This totemic design is the same as that painted on his body during circumcision. See
body paintings associated with circumcision, Pl. 128. Warner (1937), pp. 415-16, in his description [304]
and interpretation of the mortuary rituals of the Murngin, an adjacent people, records that the totemic design is painted on the body of the dead man so that the spirits, or *Mokoi*, can identify him.

[14] Similar to the bark figures, Fig. 65C. D. Frazer (1936), p. 59, records: 'In Tahiti . . .
the priest took a number of small slips of plantain leaf-stalk, fixed two or three pieces under [171]
each arm of the corpse, placed a few on the breast, and then, addressing the corpse, said,
"There are your family, there is your child, there is your wife, there is your father, and there is your mother. Be satisfied yonder (that is, in the world of the spirits). Look not toward those who are left in this world."'

417

764 climb to the top of the platform and, taking the corpse from those below, lay it on the bed of leaves,[15] face upwards.

764 As the two men descend, others blow a wooden trumpet informing the 775 *Mokoi*[16] of the death, knowing that they will take the spirit from the locality for a time so that it will not be a danger to its living relatives. At the same time [534] another man climbs a tall tree and makes a noise like the night-bird, *kawawak* (associated with the *Mokoi*).[17] As soon as the aboriginal in the tree hears the *Mokoi* coming (they make a coughing sound) he descends quickly and with the rest of the mourners runs quickly from the burial ground. This is done, not only to make the dead man's spirit go with the *Mokoi*, but because the *Mokoi*, particularly that of the newly dead man, are dangerous to the living.

(ii) *The Cleansing of the Bones*

764 For the next two or three months no one goes to the burial platform. When, however, putrefaction is complete, the maggots from the body have entered the ground and turned into blowflies, the aborigines meet to perform the second phase in the burial rituals, the cleansing of the bones.[18]

[533] Totemic dances belonging to the clan of the dead man are performed to the accompaniment of much singing, the beating of music sticks and the blowing of the wooden trumpet. The noise of these rituals is supposed to scare the spirit of the dead man and his ghostly attendants, the *Mokoi*, from the burial platform. The body is lifted from the platform or, if an earth burial, exhumed and a curious ritual performed over it, in which two men sit, one on either side of the corpse, whilst a third thrusts a spear into it, saying that he has speared a turtle.[19] The women, who have been sitting at one side, then come forward, take the skeleton apart, wash the bones in water and wrap them in paper-bark to remove the smell. At the end of three days the women unwrap the bones, rub them with red ochre and place them in a temporary bark coffin, on the outside of which the men have painted the totemic symbols of the deceased.[20]

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[15] If when a man dies there are only a few people present, the corpse is wrapped in paper bark and buried in the ground.

[774] [779] [16] The *Mokoi (jiritja)* and *Wuna (dua)* are spirits living in the jungle, who are always seeking souls of the newly-dead for company. A dead person has two spirits, one, *wakinu*, which finally goes to a distant 'heaven' (p. 326) and one which stays on earth. The latter are the *Mokoi*. (See Warner (1937), p. 116; also p. 338.) There are, however, many kinds of *Mokoi*, and our information about them is very limited.

[17] See ceremonial staff of *kawawak*, Pl. 134E.

[18] See description of bark coffins, p. 317.

[19] The significance of this ritual is obscure. Warner (1937), p. 143, refers to it. A similar ritual is supposed to be carried out at Purelko, the final resting place of the *dua* dead, p. 325.

[171] [20] Frazer (1936), p. 5, mentions that, 'In Misol, a small island to the north-west of New Guinea. . . the body, wrapped in clothes, is deposited on a scaffold built for it in the forest. From time to time the relations come to inspect the corpse until decomposition is complete. The skeleton is then brought to the place, generally a cave, where the bones of all the dead inhabitants of the village are collected.' This is a similar burial custom to that carried out by the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land and might well be the source from which the Arnhem Land custom originated.

The skull,[21] which also has been painted with its totemic design, is placed 764 in a string carrying-bag. Both the skull and the bark coffin containing the bones are carried from one camp to another by a near female relative of the dead man [765] and suitably mourned over, so that the dead spirit will be happy. At night the bark coffin is placed on a pair of forked sticks, and the skull, in its carrying-bag, hung on a nearby tree.

(iii) *The Final Burial* [593]

At the end of some months, after the old men have decided that the time is [313] ripe for the final disposal of the bones, the brothers of the dead man cut down a hollow tree to make a log coffin and, after taking off the bark, paint on it the totemic design of the dead man.[22]

While the bones are being transferred from the bark to the log coffin the men perform the water dance. A tribal sister then digs a hole in the ground, the log coffin is placed in the hole in an upright position,[23] the earth packed tightly round the base, and the burial rituals are over. Sometimes the small bones of the hands and feet are given to near relatives as mementoes. The skull, being too large to go in the log coffin, is usually broken up and thrown away.

Four bark paintings illustrate the burial rituals: Pl. 100A, the ceremonies at 764 death; Pl. 99D, the cleansing of the bones and the placing in the bark coffin; 532* Pl. 100B, the transference of the bones to the log coffin; and Pl. 101D, a complete sequence of burial.

On Pl. 100A, panel *a*, a newly deceased man is surrounded by mourning women. On panel *b*, the dead man is in his grave (this is an earth burial). On the lower edge of the painting three men are beating their music sticks together [534] and singing, accompanied by a fourth, blowing his drone tube.[24] Above the grave are four dancing women and, on panel *c*, another line of women singing and dancing. The remainder of the painting deals with the journey of the spirit to Nalkuma, the *jiritja* heaven. This will be described later, p. 529.

Plate 99D pictures a ceremony associated with the second phase of the burial ceremonies of a *dua* man, the cleansing of the bones.

In the centre of the painting is the desiccated body resting on the burial platform (short lines on either side). At *a* his mother, *b* his sister, *c* his wife, are stabbing themselves in the scalp with a bone specially sharpened for the occasion. The blood flowing from each woman is indicated by the adjacent cross-hatching. At *d* and *f*, two *dua* men are beating their music sticks and chanting the burial songs, and at *e* a *jiritja* man is blowing the drone tube.

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[21] See painted skull, Pl. 101C, E.

[22] This design is the same as that painted on the body of the dead man throughout his life.

[23] See Milingimbi log coffin, Pl. 107A. Those used at Yirrkalla were longer, simpler and without projecting spikes on top.

[24] This is a hollow stick, or sometimes a length of bamboo, about two inches in diameter and up to five feet in length, which is blown like a trumpet. Some investigators call them by the European name of didjeridoo.

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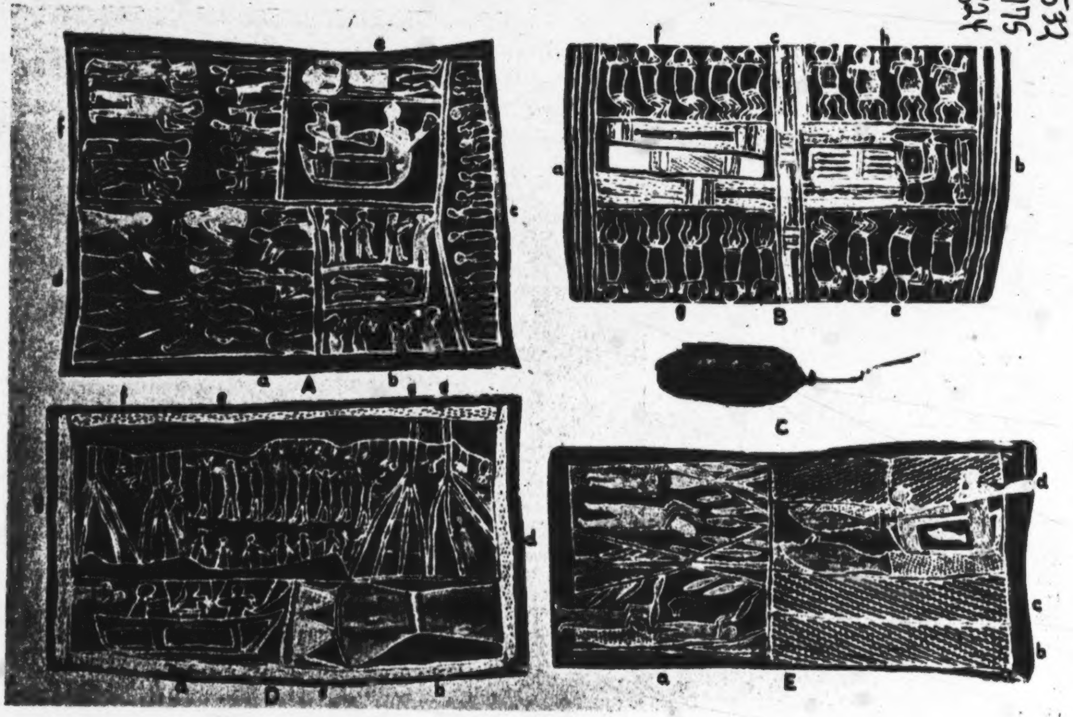
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PLATE 100. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, E Journey of jiritja dead B Final stage of burial C Bean of menin vine
D Jiritja heaven, Nalkuma

Three *dua* men, *h, h, h*, and two *jiritja* men, *j, j*, are performing the totemic dances of the dead man, the cross-hatching between the figures symbolizing the dust rising from under their feet. At *g* is a *dua* woman ready to take the skeleton apart, and at *m* a *jiritja* woman waiting with the bark coffin. 764 532+

Plate 100B deals with the third and final stage of burial, the transference of the bones from the bark to the log coffin.[25] In panel *a* there are two *dua* log coffins and one *jiritja*, the *jiritja* being in the middle. In the left of panel *b* are two bark coffins, the left-hand one containing the bones of a *jiritja* man and the right-hand one the bones of a *dua* man.[26] The cross-hatched panels on both sides of the coffins are the forked sticks of the burial platform, and the vertical panel *c* the framework. The various performers in the ceremony are depicted in panels *d, e, f* and *g*, each group holding their hands and arms in a manner peculiar to their moiety and sex.

Thus, in panel *e* the *jiritja* women are dancing with their hands held at waist level, and on panel *f*, the *dua* women, with their knuckles held tightly against their heads. On panel *g*, the *dua* men are holding both hands above their heads, and at *d* the *jiritja* men have one hand held high and the other at waist level. In the right of panel *b*, two men are providing music for the dancers, the *jiritja* (right) blowing the drone tube and the *dua* (left) singing and beating his music sticks. 184 516 616

Plate 101D is divided into seven panels, each picturing some phase of the second, third or fourth stages of the ceremonies.

In panel *a* (lower right), the dead man, the central figure, is being lifted from the burial platform by four aborigines, two on each side. The small figure at the feet of the corpse represents one of the wives whose duty it is to clean the bones. In the next panel, *b*, one man is blowing the drone tube, and to the right of him another is singing and beating his music sticks together. The central figure of this panel is a woman wrapping the bones in paper-bark to remove the smell before they are placed in the temporary bark coffin. The four figures on the right are women performing the burial dance. On panel *c* (lower left) are six more dancing women. 482

The upper left panel, *d*, shows the bones, now encased in the temporary bark coffin, being passed to the mother, or the wife, of the deceased (central position). On the lower edge of the same panel, reading from the left, is a drone-tube player, one man beating his music sticks and singing and five women dancing. The two lines of men on the upper edge are performing a totemic dance at the same time as the bark coffin is being handed to the woman. The remaining panels depict the final disposal of the bones in the log coffin. In *e* are seven men and the log coffin containing the bones, whilst in panel *f* the women are dancing. Some men are playing the drone tube in panel *g*, others are beating the music

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[25] See bark coffin, Yirrkalla, Pl. 102C, D, and Milingimbi, Pl. 103B, C.

[26] This painting suggests that on some occasions the bones of the members of both moieties are transferred to their respective log coffins at the same time.

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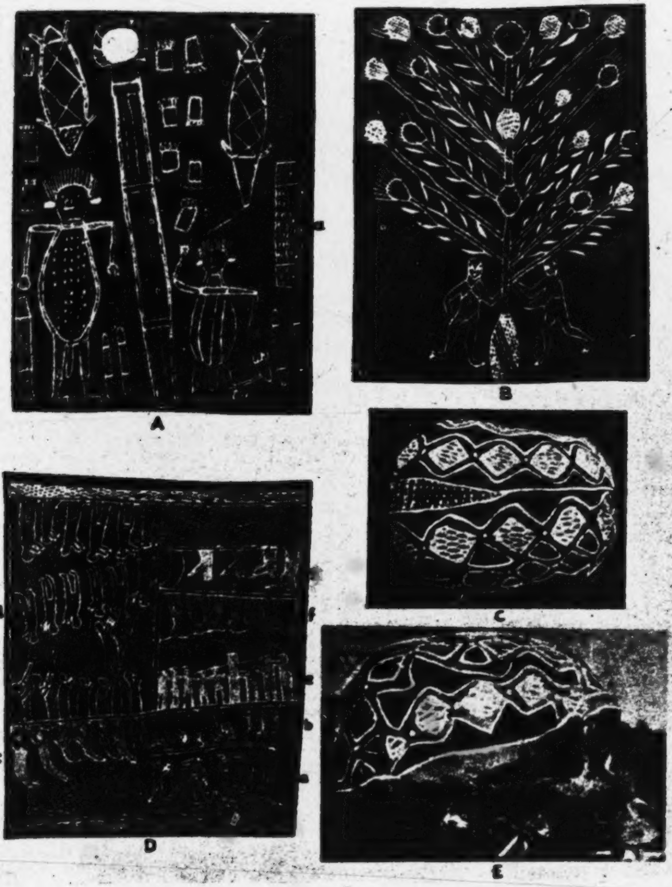

PLATE 101. Bark paintings and painted skull, Yirrkalla

A The dua journey of the dead
B The flight of the morning star
C. E A painted skull
D A burial ceremony

sticks and singing the burial songs. The cross-hatched areas throughout the painting symbolize the dust rising from the feet of the dancers. 764 532*

Plate 101C, E pictures the painted skull of a *jiritja* woman of the honey bee totem of the *dalwongu mata*[27] of Blue Mud Bay.

On Plate 101C the central dotted triangular design is the bee-bread, and the transverse lines across it, the young bees. The diamond shapes, covering the whole skull, represent the comb filled with honey, and the surrounding white lines, the wax.

(iv) *Coffins*

The aborigines of Yirrkalla use two kinds of coffins: log coffins, in which the bones are finally deposited, and temporary bark coffins, in which the wife or mother carries the bones from camp to camp.

I saw several log coffins at Yirrkalla. They were placed vertically in the ground and stood up to seven feet in height. Although some had rings cut round their circumference, all evidence of painted decoration had been washed away by the elements.

However, my informants made me seven replicas of the temporary bark coffins. These coffins belonged to individuals of five totems: *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man; *gariwa*, the green turtle; *kapu*, the water totem; *tungaldji*, the brolga; and *kundura*, the serpent. [82]

Warner[28] describes how, when the log is being prepared and painted as a coffin, it is treated in a similar manner to a totemic emblem. It is kept in a special place and, while being painted, is chanted over by men singing a cycle of songs belonging to the moiety of the dead men.

Tjambuwal, the Thunder-man

Plate 102A, B is the design painted on a temporary bark coffin of a man who was a member of the totems of *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man, *tjunda*, the lizard, and *buorta*, the water-bird.

The three top centre panels on A refer to the *Tjambuwal* myth. In the centre is *Tjambuwal* with splashes of his urine rising into the sky and forming clouds. The clouds, *wulmu* (curious loops of clouds, which the natives pointed out to me), occupy the panels on either side of *Tjambuwal*. The outer upper panels deal with the bird, *buorta*, whose tracks are indicated in one group of diagonal lines, and the seeds of the swamp grass on which *buorta* feeds are shown as dots in the adjacent group. The cross-hatching between these lines represent the leaves of the swamp grass.[29]

The designs in the four lower panels all refer to the lizard, *tjunda*, at Port Bradshaw. In these panels the artist has painted the traditional designs of the

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[27] This is the *mata* design of the *dalwongu* language group. Fig. 64J.

[28] Warner (1937), p. 441.

[29] These designs are almost identical with those on the music stick of *Djunkgao*. Pl. 132E, F.

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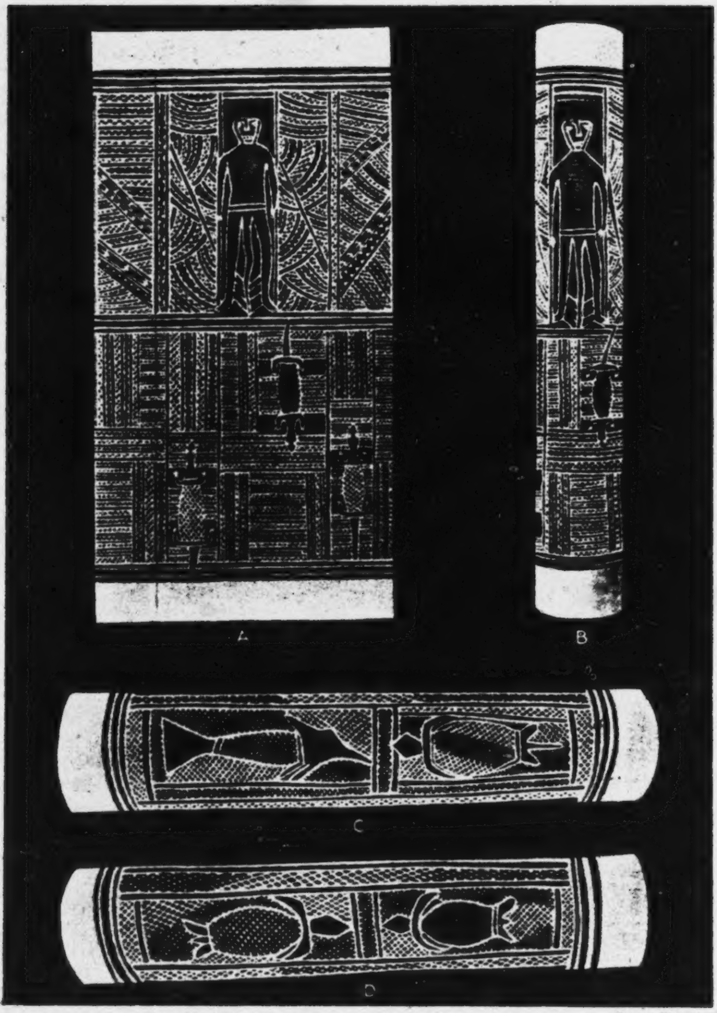

PLATE 102. Coffins, Yirrkalla and Milingimbi *Betty Hunter*

A, B The thunder-man, Tjambuwal C, D The green turtle, gariwa

parallel sand-hills and the lizard walking on the soft sand, as they were seen and 764
'sung' by *Djunkgao* at Port Bradshaw.[30] On the lower left-hand panel the lines 532*
of cross-hatching symbolize the light on the crest of the breaking waves, seen by *Djunkgao* as he landed on the beach at Bilapinja Island.[31]

The Green Turtle, Gariwa

Plate 102C, D pictures the coffin of a man belonging to the totem of the
mythical green turtle, *gariwa* (*Chelonia mydas*), whose totemic place is on the 823
floor of the sea between Yirrkalla and Bremer Island.[32] On one side of the coffin, 778
Pl. 102D, are two green turtles, *gariwa*, and on the other, Pl. 102C, in the left-hand panel, is a dolphin, and in the right an unidentified turtle, *jurnungi*. The cross-hatched band between them is the totemic rock at the bottom of the sea and the surrounding cross-hatching, the ocean.

The Water Totem, Kapu

These two coffins belonged to *dua* men of the *kapu*, water, totemic place near 778
Blue Mud Bay, where three fresh-water streams run into the Koolatong River.[33] 823
One, Pl. 103C, appears to belong to the fresh-water side, and the other, Pl. 104B, to the salt-water side of the totemic locality.

The transverse bands encircling the coffin, Pl. 103C, are the three water-courses mentioned in the myth. The lower cross-hatched vertical panels represent the 'new' water, i.e. the fresh water which flows into the river after the heavy rains. The lines of dots on the upper section of the coffin are frog's eggs, the cross-hatched areas between, running water, and the short transverse lines at *a*, logs lying in the bed of the streams.

On Pl. 104B the lines of rectangles[34] represent the waters of the sea, and the groups of lines encircling the coffin, ridges of sand left by the receding tide.

The Brolga, Tungaldji

When the brolgas (*Grus rubicundus*) were men, during creation times, they 764
used to walk between the Meilinourit waterholes in the extensive swamp country 773*
of Diaunjari, Blue Mud Bay. 532*

Later these men transformed themselves into brolgas, which still live in considerable numbers in that locality.

Plate 104D is the painted designs on a bark coffin belonging to a man of the *tungaldji*, brolga, totem. The circular designs are the Meilinourit waterholes. Paper-bark trees, *mambara*, now grow in the swamps. The radiating paths are those made by the brolga men as they travelled from one waterhole to the other in search of food.

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[30] Bark painting, Pl. 86A; myth, p. 273.
[31] Bark painting, Pl. 85F; myth, p. 271.
[32] See carved figure of green turtle, Pl. 141A, B; myth, p. 447.
[33] Map, Fig. 57.
[34] This is the *mata* design of the *djapu* language group, Fig. 64A.

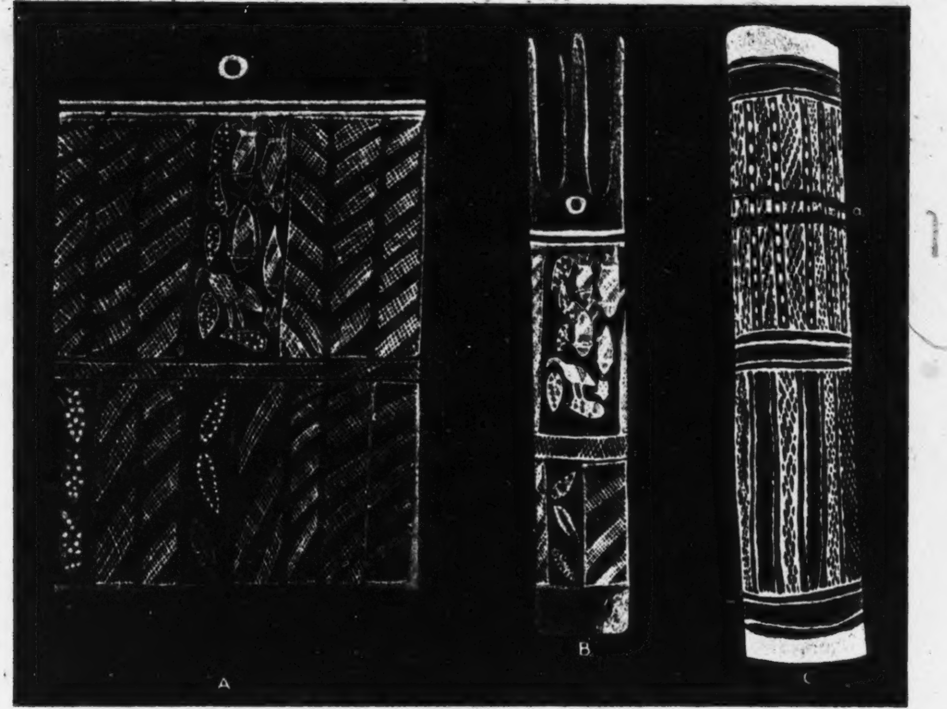

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Plate 103. Coffins, Yirrkalla and Milingimbi

A, B Unidentified C Water, kapu

The Serpent, Kundura[35]

Two temporary bark coffins belonging to a man of the *kundura*, snake, totem were made and painted by the same artist. Though the designs on the two coffins are similar in appearance, they relate to different parts of the same myth.

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During creation times there were a number of mythical *kundura* snakes in north-eastern Arnhem Land. One *kundura* lived in the mangrove swamps at a place called Baimaruna, south of Milingimbi. Whilst there, he swallowed two women and a child.[36] Later, when the *kundura* moved his camp to Tualki, at Arnhem Bay, he vomited up the dead people. Two other mythical *kundura* (Pl. 104A) made their camp at Karami, in the forest country near Arnhem Bay. They were quiet people and did not interfere with anyone. The Milingimbi *kundura* lived at Tualki for some time before he invited the two *kundura* at Karami, who were then man and wife, to stay with him. When they agreed to do so, they all changed themselves into the present-day harmless python of that name which lives among the rocks.

The coffin designs on Pl. 104C deal with the Milingimbi *kundura* snakes which moved to Tualki, a mangrove swamp at Arnhem Bay. The transverse panel, *a*, is a fresh-water stream. When the tide is out, this stream flows down the central watercourse *c*, filling the swamps, panels *d* and *e*, with fresh water. At high tide the water flows from the sea, panel *f*, along watercourse c_1 in the opposite direction, replacing the fresh water in the swamps with salt water. The painting on the coffin shows two *kundura* in each swamp. The design at the head of the snake on panel *e* is their camp.

Plate 104A, although similar in design to C, deals with the section of the myth in which two *kundura* snakes camped in the forest country at Karami, Arnhem Bay. In panel *a* are two of the *kundura* snakes, the crescent at the head of the one on the left representing their dry-season camp. The transverse lines of cross-hatching on panels *a* and *b* are symbolical of the ribs of the snakes.[37]

Whilst engaged on archaeological research at Milingimbi, F. M. Setzler and F. D. McCarthy collected three log coffins, together with a simple interpretation of the designs.

Fresh-water Tortoise, Mimala

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Plate 105A, B belongs to a man of the *mimala*, fresh-water tortoise, totemic group. The main figure is the fresh-water tortoise.[38] The pear-shaped designs near the head and on the right are fresh-water snakes, called *tjaluing*. The holes cut through the upper end of the coffin are the 'eyes' of the coffin.[39] In these the mourners sometimes place the long leg bones of the dead man. The prongs

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[35] The snake, *kundura*, is also known by the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, Pl. 25F.

[36] This bears some resemblance to the myth of the *julunggul* serpent which swallowed the *Wawalik* sisters, p. 278; Warner (1937), p. 250.

[37] The convention of showing the ribs of snakes external to the body, a simple form of X-ray art, is not unusual. See Pl. 7C and Fig. 5 from Central Australia.

[38] See bark painting, Pl. 126A, and engraved pipe, Fig. 50D, belonging to *mimala*.

[39] Warner (1937), p. 441.

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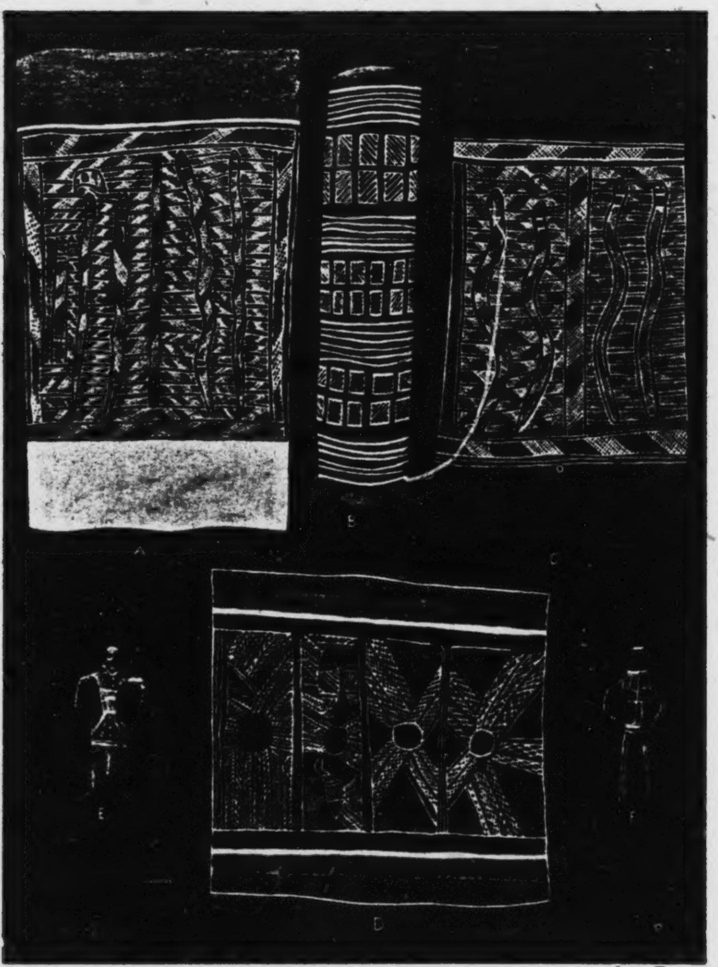

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PLATE 104. Coffins and wax figures, Yirrkalla

A, C The snake, kundura B Water, kapu D The brolga, tungaldji
E, F Oijal and Neri-neri

represent the mouth and teeth of an unknown mythical monster. There was no explanation for the fish designs on the lower right. 764 532*

Fresh-water Fish, Kwiwarina.

Plate 105C, D belongs to a member of the fresh-water fish, *kwiwarina*, totem of the *dua* moiety, whose totemic place is on the Glyde River. The more or less triangular designs, upper left, represent huts, called *ambit*, and the oval designs on the other panels, women's carrying-baskets. The dots on the edge of the baskets symbolize the mythical fresh-water fish, *kwiwarina*, and the cross-hatching inside, smaller fish. As in A, the holes are the 'eyes' of the coffin, and the prongs the teeth and jaws of some unidentified monster.

Unidentified Totem

Plate 108A, B is a coffin of an unidentified totem from Milingimbi. In the upper central panel, A, the bird is an emu, and the pear-shaped designs, yams. Three large fresh-water fish occupy the upper right. Below them is a cat-fish, *kingding* (distinguished by the tentacles from the mouth and the lack of fins), and near the head of the cat-fish, a diamond fish. Three king-fish, *jungala*, are shown in the lower left panel, and three cat-fish, *kingding*, in the lower central panel.

(c) THE JOURNEY OF THE DEAD SPIRIT AND ITS AFTER-LIFE

When the log coffin has been placed in its final position and the people have returned to their camps, the spirits of the dead leave their bones, and according to their moiety, travel to their respective 'heaven'. In these 'heavens' there is always pleasant weather and ample food. Everyone is happy, because each spirit on its arrival, whatever its previous disposition, is changed into a person of equable temperament and good health. All day long the spirits may bask in the sun, talking to old friends about their mutual experiences when on earth together, and every evening they perform their favourite ceremonies and sing their favourite songs. Many of the spirit people, however, amuse themselves by going out in their canoes to hunt the sea-creatures for food.[40] 775

Although the *dua* and *jiritja* myths of the journey of the spirit to the land of the dead have many points of resemblance, the destinations are different, the *dua* spirits travelling east to Purelko,[41] an island near the sunrise, and the *jiritja* to Nalkuma,[42] a land to the north, where in addition to the usual 775 616

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[40] See *dua* myths, *Turi turi*, p. 329, and *Balu balu*, p. 152; also *jiritja* myth of *Kultana*, p. 329, the *Mokoi* and the dugongs, p. 315.

[41] Warner (1937), p. 524, tells an interesting myth of the journey of a mortal man to Purelko.

[42] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 54, record that Badu (Mulgrave Island in the Torres Straits) is the *jiritja* home of the dead. My Yirrkalla *jiritja* informants said that Nalkuma, their 'heaven', is to the north. It would appear, however, from the myth associated with the carved figure of *Jindpurani* (Pl. 139J, K), p. 441, that the *jiritja* groups at Arnhem Bay have a different 'heaven' from that of the aborigines of Yirrkalla. [184]

[text continues on p. 325]

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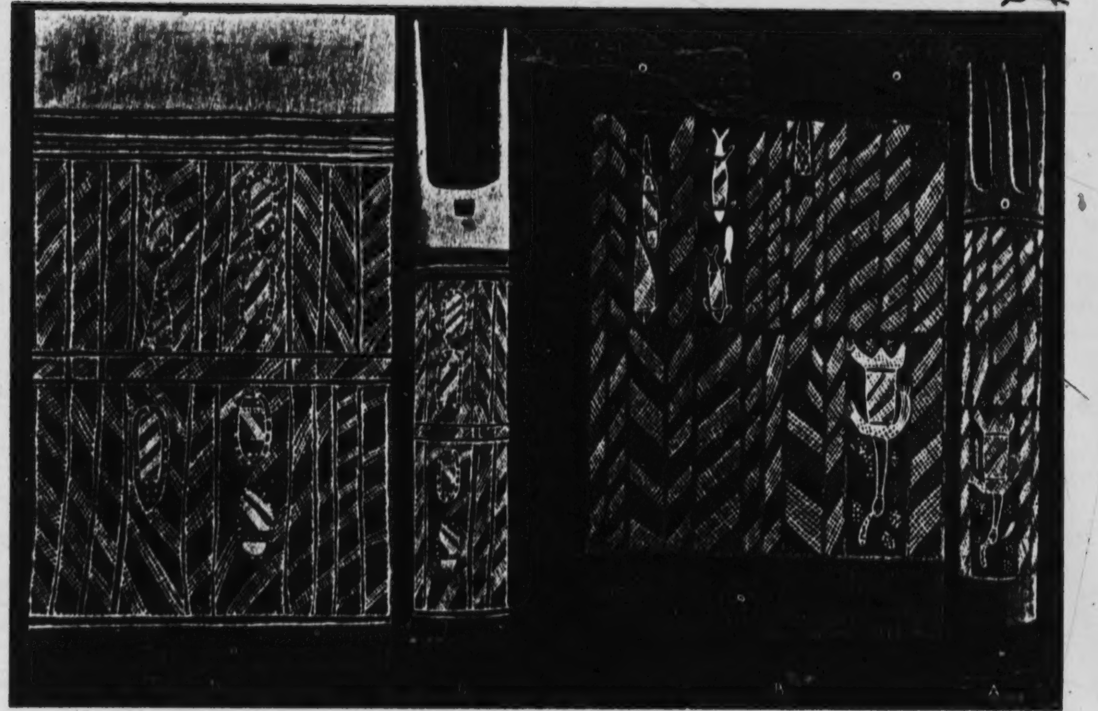

Jean Truran

PLATE 105. Coffins, Milingimbi

A, B The tortoise, minmala C, D The fresh-water fish, kwiwarina

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aboriginal foods there are many coco-nut trees and much tobacco.[43] These exotic foods do not exist in the *dua* heaven.

(i) *The Journey of the Dua Spirits of the Dead*

As soon as the mourners have left the final burial ground, the *dua* spirit leaves his bones, and entering a bark canoe, is paddled by a *Mokoi*, the first man who died, to Jumundi, a jungle on the western shores of Melville Bay. At Jumundi he meets a number of other spirits called together for the occasion by the two *Mokoi*, *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*.[44] The new spirit and the *Mokoi* dance all night, carrying in their hands the jungle-flower, *wakoru-nani*, collected by the woman, *Bunbulama*. When morning comes the spirit of the dead man and his ghostly boatman leave for Dambalia, accompanied by a number of dolphins.[45]

The boatman and his companion spend the next night at Dambalia (Bremer Island), performing ceremonies and dancing. This time they carry in their hands the red flower of a yam called *mawoka*.[46] Next morning the spirits start on the last stage of the journey for the distant isle of Purelko. After paddling for many days toward the sunrise and the place where the morning star, *barnumbir*, rises above the horizon, the two boatmen, accompanied by many dolphins, reach their destination. As they land and walk along a path a masked plover, *berrk-berrk* (an onomatopoeic name), which has been watching for their arrival, rises from the ground with a shrill call, a call which tells the inhabitants of Purelko of the arrival of a new spirit. The leader of Purelko, *Jualin-wura*, a man with a painted penis, meets and welcomes the new arrival and offers him wives and food.

After the new spirit has met his wives, established his camp and satisfied his hunger, he is welcomed by many of his old friends. Later, when walking through the trees, he surprises two women who are gathering food. The women run quickly to their camp, distinguished by the smoke rising from the many cooking fires, and tell the men of Purelko that they have just seen a new spirit. The men form themselves into a line, spears in hand, and wait. When the dead man sees them, he endeavours to distract their attention by dancing first the brolga dance, then the moon-fish dance. But the spirit men of Purelko quietly wait until the visitor has finished his dances before they cast their spears into his body, one

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[43] The aborigines believe that the coco-nuts, lengths of bamboos and occasionally canoes (see engraved pipe, Fig. 63B) which are cast up on the Yirrkalla beaches during the northerly, *lungurama*, winds are sent to them by the spirits of Nalkuma. The *lungurama* winds (see winds, p. 133) which originate at Nalkuma are also a gift from the spirits of the dead. [823 824]

[44] See myth of *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*, p. 296.

[45] Warner (1937), p. 366, records that the porpoises (dolphins) take the spirits of the *dua* Milingimbi men to Purelko. At Yirrkalla, the dolphins carry only the spirits of the *dua* children to Purelko. [825]

[46] In one account, a ceremonial object made from the yam, *mawoka*, and its flower is taken from Dambalia to Purelko, where it was transformed into the morning star, *barnumbir*. It is not clear whether this flower is carried by every spirit that passes through Dambalia, or whether it was made in creation times, and is now permanently at Purelko.

775 after another. At first the spears penetrate deeply into his flesh, but after a while it becomes so hard and tough that the spears cannot even pierce the skin.[17]
616 While this is going on, the women sit on the ground and wail in sympathy for the sufferings of the new spirit.

This ordeal over, the men of Purelko take the new spirit to their camp, tell him that he has passed his initiation, teach him many new songs and dances and invite him to join in their ceremonies.

The method of entry of the spirit of a woman is somewhat different. When the masked plover, *berrk-berrk,* announces the arrival of a new spirit and the head man, *Jaualin-wura*, finds out that it is a woman, he sends a small child along the track which leads from the beach to Purelko, telling it to find its mother and bring her to him. *Jaualin-wura* always camps on that track so that no one can reach Purelko without being properly prepared. After *Jaualin-wura* has met the new arrival and, if necessary, transformed her into a young woman in good health, she stays in his camp until she is pregnant. She is then admitted to Purelko where, after a short and painless period of gestation, she gives birth to
[842] her child. The idea behind this belief is that a woman, who must be perfect to enter Purelko, has to show that she is capable of bearing a child.

775 Two women, *Dunjun-jina* and *Mitjuna*, live at Purelko and keep the morning
616 star, *barnumbir*, in a string bag, guarding it jealously all the day and most of the night, lest it should escape. A little before dawn, *Jaualin-wura*, the head man
821 of Purelko, says to the women: 'It's time that you let the morning star out of that bag so that it can visit the *dua* camps on earth both to wake up the men, women and children and to give them the messages from the dead.'

The woman *Mitjuna* objects strongly to this suggestion, because she is afraid that she might lose *barnumbir*, but *Jaualin-wura* overrules her, and releases the morning star, which is already struggling to get out of the bag to perform its allotted tasks.[18] At first *barnumbir* rests on the top of a tall pandanus tree from which it can see a long distance. This causes the women to cry out in fear that they might lose the star, and to ask that it be returned to them. To pacify the women *Jaualin-wura* pulls the morning star back again (it is on a string) and puts it in the bag. But, though the women are pleased, *Jaualin-wura* thinks of the aborigines on earth waiting for their messages. So he opens the bag again and allows *barnumbir* to escape. For a while the morning star dances along the surface of the water, but soon climbs rapidly into the sky. It visits each *dua* place
[*532] in turn,[19] wakes the aborigines and then gives them messages from their relatives and friends at Purelko. Just as dawn is breaking *Jaualin-wura* takes hold of the

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[764] [17] The body is speared when it is taken from the burial platform, p. 312. Warner (1937), p. 443, refers to the same practice. All the male spirits have to pass through this initiation ritual at Purelko. There are different rituals for the women, p. 325. There are no such ordeals in the
[184] *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma.

[18] The *dua* moiety of Milingimbi have a similar belief. Myth, p. 328.

[19] See p. 327 for the list of *dua* localities.

string, pulls in the star and, placing it in the carrying-bag, gives it to the women, who guard it until the next morning.

One bark painting, Pl. 99A, illustrates the *dua* journey of the dead; another, Pl. 101B, the flight of the *dua* morning star, *barnumbir*, from Purelko.[50]

The lower part of the right-hand panel, *a*, of Pl. 99A shows the dead spirit arriving at Jumundi, on the western shores of Melville Bay, after he has been ferried across by his ghostly boatman. The dead man is in the stern. The upper part of the cross-hatching indicates the sea; the lower, the shore. The upper part, *b*, of the right-hand panel deals with the ceremony held by the *Mokoi* at Jumundi, Melville Bay. On the right are two performers, each holding in their hands the red jungle-flower, *wakoro-nani*. A third man is blowing the drone tube, another beating the music sticks together, while three men, with their hands upraised, are chanting the songs.

In the lower part of the central panel, *c*, the dead man and his companion have crossed the sea, indicated by the vertical cross-hatched band *g*, and landed at Dambalia. Two of the *Mokoi* (*d*, upper central panel) are holding in their hands the flower of the yam, *mawoka*; others are either blowing the drone tube, beating the music sticks or singing.

The left-hand panel, *e*, pictures the arrival at Purelko. The tree-like design, panel *f*, is the morning star, *barnumbir*.[51] On the right-hand edge are two men, one blowing the drone tube, the other beating the music sticks. The birds on the upper and lower edge are the plovers, *berrk-berrk*, which announced the arrival of the new spirit and the small figure at the bottom, a child, who also saw his arrival. The new spirit is in the extreme lower left. Next to him is *Jaualin-wuna*, and in the upper left, a man who is singing. The vertical cross hatched band, *h*, is the sea between Dambalia and Purelko.

Plate 101B deals with the flight of the *dua* morning star, *barnumbir*. This painting has a dual meaning. In the first place, it represents the yam, *mawoka*, apparently a climbing plant, the flower of which is used by the *Mokoi* and the new spirit in the ceremonies at Dambalia. The design at the base is the yam, *mawoka*; the two ovals on the trunk, the fruit, *bukulita*; and the designs on the end of each branch, the blossoms. The swellings on some of the branches indicate where the creeper has twined itself round a tree.

The meaning of the painting is very different in the myth of the morning-star, *barnumbir*. The design at the base is the carrying bag in which the morning star is imprisoned by the two women, *Dunjun-jina* and *Motjuna*, standing either side. The women are objecting to the order from *Jaualin-wuna* that the morning star must be released. Each of the blossoms represents a locality.[52]

Starting from the lowest blossom on the left, and reading in a clockwise direction, the localities are:

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[50] Warner (1937), p. 527, records that *Barnumbir* only visits *dua* localities.

[51] See bark painting of morning star, Pl. 101A, in Milingimbi myth.

[52] Although I did not specifically inquire, the evidence suggests that each of these localities belongs to either a *dua* clan, *mala*, or language group, *mata*.

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1. North of Arnhem Bay
2. South of Arnhem Bay
3. Elcho Island
4. South of Rocky Beach, south of Yirrkalla
5. Dambalia (Bremer Island)
6. Wessel Islands
7. A small unidentified island in Buckingham Bay
8. English Company Islands, near Cape Wilberforce
9. Buckingham Bay, south side
10. Blue Mud Bay
11. Northern Blue Mud Bay
12. West Blue Mud Bay
13. Koolatong River
14. Between Caledon and Blue Mud Bays
15. Caledon Bay
16. Mt Saunders, between Port Bradshaw and Caledon Bay
17. Jelangbara, near Port Bradshaw
18. Port Bradshaw

I also collected a painting and myth from the Milingimbi area, which dealt with the Djiraia, the *dua* home of the dead (analagous to Purelko), and the morning star, *barnumbir*. Except for different names and locality, the beliefs are essentially the same. This painting indicates that the *dua* moiety of north-eastern Arnhem Land have more than one 'heaven'.

[776] Djiraia, the home of the dead and the morning star, is situated on a rocky island somewhere east of the English Company Islands (Fig. 1). Two spirit men, *Jumundik* and *Dalnuranu*, are in charge. When a member of the tribes who live adjacent to Milingimbi dies, no matter where he is, his spirit, after the burial ceremonies are completed, goes straight to Djiraia.[53] As the spirit approaches the shore two masked plovers announce his arrival. The spirits of the dead, the *Mokoi*, then stand on the shore to welcome him.

If a man or woman has been evil, malicious or bad-tempered, he is changed into a person of good nature before he enters the spirit land, because all must be happy and at peace with each other. Also, should the spirit be aged, infirm or sick, he is made young and healthy again, for in that country all must be well. In Djiraia there is no want, no hardships and no quarrels. There is an abundance of food everywhere, fish in the swamps and the seas, and kangaroos, emus and other game in the forest. It is never cold, so that everyone, being young and transformed into a good person, is happy. The days are spent in hunting and eating, and the evenings in song and ceremony.

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The morning star, *barnumbir*,[54] is kept in a cave under the care of two women, who sleep all day and most of the night. But just before dawn these women wake up and tell the two men, *Jumundik* and *Dalnuranu*, that it is time they stopped their singing and let the morning star out of the cave to wake up mankind, otherwise they will sleep all day long. When *barnumbir* is first released it dances up and down on the surface of the sea. It then climbs up a tall pandanus tree, then flies through the air to visit a number of localities where the aborigines live. When the dawn breaks the women take hold of the string

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[53] According to Warner (1937), p. 366, these spirits are carried by the porpoises (dolphins).
[54] See Milingimbi myth of morning star, Warner (1937), p. 527.

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attached to *barnumbir*, pull it back and imprison it in the cave until the next morning.[55]

On the lower left of Pl. 101A is *Jumundik*, with his wooden trumpet to the left of him and his two music sticks to the right. On the right is *Dalnuranu*, who, with *Jumundik*, is in charge of Djiraia. His wooden trumpet, *a*, and music sticks are on his right. The footprints are those of the *Mokoi* spirits at Djiraia. There was no explanation for the fish. The white circle on the top of the central design is the morning star, *barnumbir*, and the long rectangle below, the rays of light, called *balai-aba*, which issue from it.

A number of spirit people provide food for the inhabitants of their respective 'heavens'. *Turi-turi* is one of them.[56] 775

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One day *Turi-turi*, an expert fisherman, set out in a bark canoe to hunt for turtles. When he was far out to sea, a heavy storm came up, broke the canoe in halves and drowned *Turi-turi*.

After his death the spirit of *Turi-turi* went to Purelko, where he still spends all of his time catching green turtles for the inhabitants of that spirit land. The *dua Mokoi*, *Balu-balu*, also provide food for their companions at Purelko.[57]

Plate 106A shows the man, *Turi-turi*, paddle in hand, standing in his canoe. To the left is the green turtle he wanted to capture. The white cross-hatching on the lower edge represents the waves which destroyed *Turi-turi's* canoe and finally drowned him. The remainder of the background is the sea.

(ii) *The Journey of the Jiritja Spirits of the Dead*

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When, at the completion of the burial ceremonies, the bones of the dead man are placed in the log coffin, the spirit leaves its bones, with which it has been associated since death, and, guided by the call of the jungle-fowl, makes its way to a forest, Gurila, north of Port Bradshaw. There it is met by female *Mokoi* called the *Wulu-wulu*,[58] whose duty it is to assist the spirit of newly-dead to reach the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuma. The *Wulu-wulu* takes the new spirit to another *Mokoi*, *Kultana*, the head man of Nalkuma, who first gives him two paddles, then instructs him how to make a special wooden canoe, called *jililbun*,[59] in which both can travel to Nalkuma. When the canoe is finished and the two are ready to set out on their journey, the women, *Wulu-wulu*, give the new spirit two seed pods, *gurung-guru*, of the *menin* vine (*Mucuna gigantea*),[60] which will serve him as a passport to Nalkuma. Any spirit who tries to gain admittance to the land of the dead without this passport is hunted away.

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[55] This is similar to the Yirrkalla myth of the morning star, p. 326, except that at Yirrkalla the two women object to the release of the morning star.

[56] The myths of *Turi-turi* and the *Balu-balu* are analagous to those of the *jiritja Mokoi* who come to Cape Arnhem in their wooden canoes to capture dugongs for the inhabitants of Nalkuma.

[57] See myth of *Balu-balu*, p. 152, associated with a painted paddle, Pl. 114E, F.

[58] See myth of carved figure of *Wulu-wulu*, p. 343.

[59] In another part of the same myth this canoe is called *Lampu*.

[60] See Pl. 106C for illustration of these seed pods.

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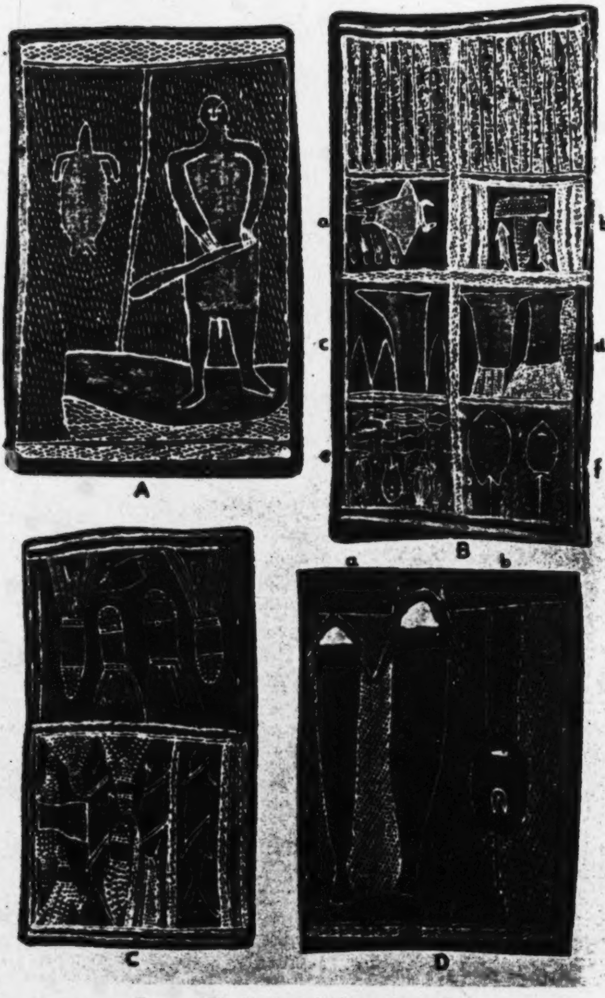

Plate 106. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The man, Turi-turi
B Totemic creatures, Cape Arnhem
C The queen fish, turtle and octopus
D The whale and the stingray

Meanwhile some of the inhabitants of Nalkuma, knowing of the impending 775 arrival of the new spirit, have paddled to Cape Arnhem to capture a dugong so 616 that there will be food for the welcoming ceremony. Others light a grass fire, the smoke of which will guide *Kultana* and his companion to their destination.

The inhabitants of Nalkuma, when they see the canoe in the distance, assemble on the shore to welcome the new arrival. His immediate friends first embrace him, then invite him to take part in the meal of dugong flesh, recently captured at Cape Arnhem. Afterwards they perform with him their favourite dances and songs. After all these activities are over the people of Nalkuma help their new companion to prepare his camp. This activity causes so much dust to [821] rise into the sky that large cumulus clouds are formed.[61] When the aborigines on earth see those clouds they know the spirit of the man whose bones they had 616 recently placed in his log coffin has reached Nalkuma, and that their period of 775 mourning is over.

Three bark paintings deal with the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma. 532*

Plate 100D depicts the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma. In panel *a* are three spirit men in the canoe, *Lampu.* Reading from the left, they are, *Deiluru*, *Uramula* and *Teri-teri*, all of whom are on their way from Nalkuma to Cape Arnhem to spear dugongs. In the upper left of the same panel and the lower right of panel *d* is *Kultana*, the head man of Nalkuma, smoking a pipe, for tobacco has always been available in Nalkuma. The long symbol on panel *b* is the cumulus cloud which forms on the top of the dust cloud caused by the spirits when preparing the camp. The triangular symbols *c*, on the left of the same panel, are the small clouds which are present after the cumulus has disintegrated.

Panel *e*, on the top of the painting, refers to the happenings at Nalkuma on the arrival of the new spirits. At *f*, on the upper left, is one of the new spirits being embraced by an old friend, and the nine figures along the upper edge are other spirits waiting to be welcomed. On the opposite edge of the same panel are a number of *Mokoi* ready to take part in the welcoming ceremony. The central line of eight figures are *Mokoi* swimming in the sea. The trees, *g. g. g.* are *kanari* (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) and the dark mark in the branches is the dense shade which this tree, with its large leaves, casts on the ground.

On Pl. 100A, panels *a*, *b* and *c* refer to the burial rituals. These have already been described on p. 314. Panels *d* and *e* deal with the journey of the dead to Nalkuma, and *f* to their reception at that place. On the left-hand edge of panel *d* are four of the female *Wulu-wulu* who live in the Gurila jungle of Port Bradshaw. They are giving the seed pods of the *mrnin* vine, *gurung-guru*, to the new spirit, centre. To the right are the two jungle-fowls whose call guided him to this locality.

In the upper right, panel *e*, the new spirit is being paddled to Nalkuma by the chief *Mokoi*, *Kultana*. A number of inhabitants of the home of the dead,

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[61] Cumulus clouds often form on the top of the smoke of bush-fires. Clouds of dust could cause the same phenomenon.

616 775 panel *f*, are welcoming the new spirit to his future home. In the upper part of *e* the new spirit is resting quietly in his camp after the ceremony is over.

*532 Plate 100E also deals with the journey of the *jiritja* dead to Nalkuma.

On the upper left of panel *a*, the new spirit is asking the *Wulu-wulu* for the seed pods, *gurung-guru*, of the *menin* vine (Pl. 100C), so that he can enter Nalkuma. Three female *Mokoi*, the *Wulu-wulu*,[62] are picking the seed pods to give to him. The black bird is the jungle-fowl whose call has guided the new spirit to Gurila jungle. At *d*, the new spirit and the boatman, *Kultana*, are in the *Mokoi* canoe, *Lampu*, while in the bottom is a dugong they have captured and are taking with them to Nalkuma. To the left of the canoe are two dugongs, the white cross-hatching at the tail of the lower, and above the upper one, representing their wake. Panel *b* is the sandy shore at Port Bradshaw, *c* the shallow water, and *d* the open sea.

(2) THE TOTEMIC PLACES AND CREATURES OF PORT BRADSHAW AND CAPE ARNHEM

423 614 *773 [616] In north-eastern Arnhem Land, where strong patrilineal clans or *mala* have the complete ownership of certain areas, the totemic places in those clan territories belong exclusively to the moiety of the aborigines who own the land. To show the richness of the mythology associated with one particular area, but which is typical of others, I have grouped all the art objects relating to the *jiritja* myths of Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem in one section.

616 *773 [423] The area around Cape Arnhem, and, so far as I could ascertain, within the harbour of Port Bradshaw, having been created by a number of *jiritja* mythical men and creatures, is owned today by *jiritja* men of the *gumaitj mata* or language group. Although the *dua* ancestors, *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*, landed on Aparina Island, at the entrance of Port Bradshaw,[63] they do not appear to have entered the harbour, but established their camp at Jelangbara, a few miles north of its entrance. Jelangbara is the property of the *dua* men of the *riredjingu mata*.

616 *773 825 [823] Even though most of the *jiritja* totemic beings of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw were harmless marine creatures, several of them are still feared. For instance, in a group of submerged rocks at Daliwa, between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, lives the serpent, *bilumbira*.[64] Should aborigines paddle too near his home, *bilumbira* will rise to the surface and with his long teeth, tear them and their canoe to pieces. The dugong, *merinjunga*,[65] at Nangata, south of Cape Arnhem, blows up smoke and fire to destroy his enemies, while the hawksbill turtle, *kouparadji*,[66] creates heavy seas which drown those who intrude on his domain. Within Port Bradshaw are two other dangerous creatures, the devil-ray, *mulara*, and the trepang, *teripi*. The former creates huge waves, and the latter squirts up fountains of water to destroy any trespassers.

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[62] See carved figure, Pl. 110c.
[63] See myth of *Djunkgao* and the *Baijini*, p. 273.
[64] See myth of *bilumbira*, p. 351.
[65] See myth of dugongs, p. 363.
[66] See myth of turtle, p. 117.

THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

During my stay at Yirrkalla a number of the *jiritja* aborigines of the *gumaitj* 616
mata produced paintings and decorated objects dealing with the totemic ancestors 773*
and the mythology of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw. They were: 532*

Port Bradshaw

Baijini men and women	Pl. 107A
Spirit men, *Mokoi*	Pl. 109E, F
Hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*	Pl. 108C
Queen fish, *tinimbu*	Pl. 110B
Devil-ray, *mulara*	Pl. 110B
Stingray, *kawangalkmiri*	Pl. 108C
Octopus, *mainda*	Pl. 108C
Trepang, *teripi*	Pl. 110B

Cape Arnhem

Man, *Borolo-borolo*, and his wives, *Mainbuno* and *Wurungil*	Pl. 110D
Spirit men, *Mokoi*	Pl. 111A
Hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*	Pl. 109A
Queen fish, *tinimbu*	Pl. 106C
Devil-ray, *mulara*	Pl. 109C, D
Stingray, *kawangalk-miri*	Pl. 106D
Octopus, *mainda*	Pl. 106C
Serpent, *bilumbira*	Pl. 112A, D
Crocodile, *barou*	Pl. 122A
Rock cod, *kouper*	Pl. 106B
Whales, *morokundja* and *welerria*	Pl. 106D
Dugong, *merinjunga*	Pl. 109B

(a) PORT BRADSHAW

Mythical Human Beings

The Baijini

At Port Bradshaw there is a puzzling myth of a fair-skinned people who 773*
during early times went there in search of trepang. The aborigines assert that 173
the *Baijini* were not at Port Bradshaw during *bumun* (creation) times but were 177
there soon afterwards, long before the Malays started to visit the coasts of Arnhem Land. The aborigines are certain the *Baijini* were not Malays, their skin being much lighter in colour.[67] They brought their wives with them (the Malays did not) and always carried a long knife, probably a sword. The uprights of their houses were made of local timber but the walls were strips of bamboo which the *Baijini* brought in their boats. The roof was thatched with unidenti-

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[67] The aborigines likened the skin of the *Baijini* to that of the sun-burned members of our party.

*773 fied palm leaves.[68] The smoking pipes of the *Baijini*, also, were unlike those of
173 the Malays,[69] but resembled those used by our own party. In fact, the aborigines used to call our pipes *Baijini* pipes.

177 The *Baijini* may have been an isolated group of fair-skinned people, perhaps early Dutch or Portuguese, whose habits and appearance especially attracted the attention of the aborigines. The fact that the *Baijini* are now part of the mythology, as shown in the bark paintings and mentioned by Berndt,[70] does not necessarily indicate great age. The aborigines' songs of the Malay prau at Bickerton Island,[71] the bark paintings from Oenpelli of the *Mimi* with a European pipe[72], prove how the mythical stories keep up to date.

The *Baijini* party, which, in one myth, consisted of two men, two women and their children, came from a country to the north, called Jumaina. They sailed into Port Bradshaw and anchored at the mouth of a creek flowing into the south side of the harbour. As soon as they had established camp, the *Baijini* started to collect, cook and dry the trepang. The men, whom at first the aborigines looked upon as dangerous, always carried a long knife, *badi*.

One day, however, two aborigines, who had sneaked through the mangroves to have a look at the boat and its occupants, saw several small *Baijini* boys gathering cockles on the beach. The men, intrigued with the light colour of the boys' skin, crept closer to get a better view, when the boys, catching sight of the aborigines, beckoned them across. The *Baijini* children, equally puzzled about
[648] the dark colour of the aboriginal men,[73] felt them all over, and asked many questions, but neither group could understand the other. The *Baijini* children then took the aborigines by the hand, led them to a patch of jungle, and, motioning them to sit down, ran to tell their parents what had happened. Two *Baijini* men returned with their sons, coaxed the aborigines to their boat and gave them food. Although at first the men did not like the taste of the *Baijini* food, they soon became used to it. Later they stayed with the *Baijini* and helped them to collect trepang, bringing their wives and relatives to assist in the work.

*773 Seven bark paintings and two carved heads[74] depict the *Baijini*.

*532 In Pl. 107A the four figures are the *Baijini* people at Port Bradshaw. Reading from the left their names are: *Tainitja*, *Ditjaru*, name forgotten, and *Gurumuluna*, whom the aborigines looked upon as the head man.[75] The men, *Tainitja* and *Gurumuluna*, are carrying large steel knives, one in either hand.

Plate 107B represents two *Baijini* men, the one on the right *Gurumuluna*, and the other unidentified. They are surrounded by *jiritja* cloud symbols, i.e. the triangular designs associated with the Cape Arnhem-Port Bradshaw area. The

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[68] Pl. 128A.
[69] p. 100.
[70] Berndt, R. and C. (1949), p. 219.
[71] p. 96.
[72] Pl. 49A.
[73] This suggests that the *Baijini* came from a country where the inhabitants were not as dark skinned as the aborigines.
[74] The carved heads are described in Part 5.
[75] On a carved head, Pl. 140B. *Gurumuluna* has a distinguishing badge on his forehead or hat.

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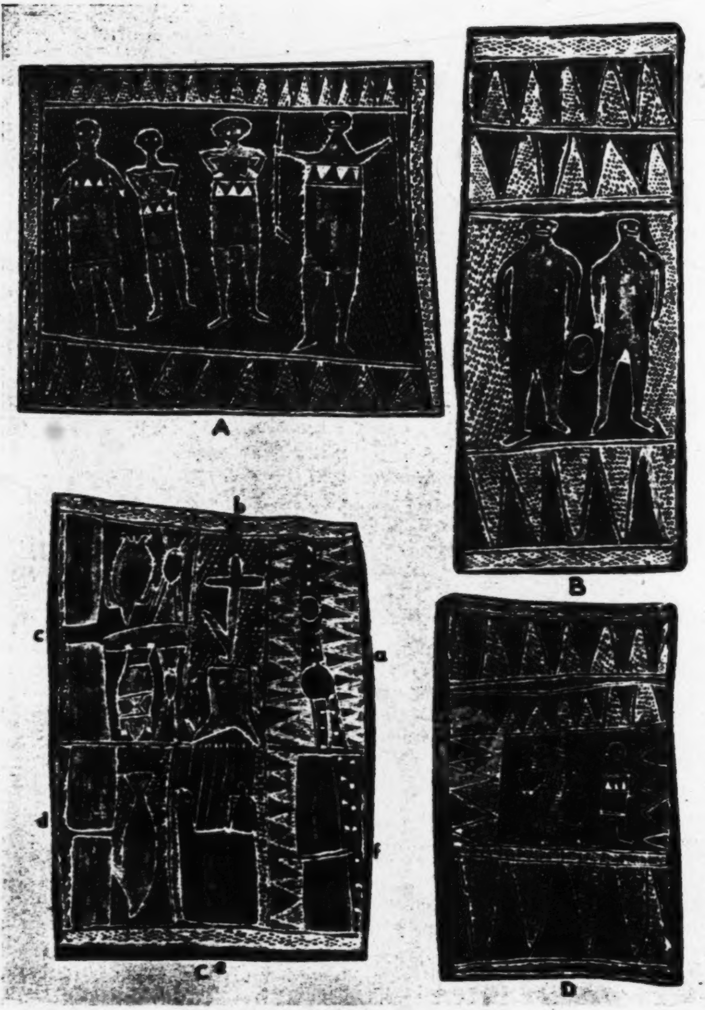

PLATE 107. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla
The Baijini at Port Bradshaw

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radiating lines round the head indicate a ceremonial head-dress the men are wearing.

Plate 107C deals with the totemic place of the *Baijini* at Port Bradshaw. In panel *a* are lines of clouds, triangular patterns, and between them the two totemic wells, dark circles, in which the *Baijini* ancestors now live. The aborigines can drink the water. The footmarks indicate the *Baijini* coming to and from the well.[76] In the upper part of the panel, *b*, is a Malay type of anchor used by the *Baijini*, and below, a wet-season cloud, with fish on either side.

In panel *c* the two rectangles on the left side are totemic rocks under the water. The upper central figure is a turtle and the lower central figure, a frog, *garakman*, standing on a rock. On the right are two webs of night spiders which have luminous eyes. The rectangles in *d* represent two rocks under the water, besides which a dugong is feeding on the sea-grass, *gumata*, indicated by the parallel lines at the head of the creature.

Two women, *Mai-auwa*, panel *e*, are standing on a large rock on shore, crying for the wet-season rains to stop.[77] The parallel lines from the bottom of the clouds in panel *b* (above the two women) symbolize the north-westerly, *bara* (wet-season) rains pouring from the cloud. In panel *f* the rectangles are areas of land associated with the *Baijini* ancestors. There are cloud symbols on the left and *Baijini* footmarks on the right.

Plate 107D again refers to the *Baijini*, this time in a creation myth.

Gurumuluna, the head man of the *Baijini*, and his sister camped at a waterhole, Bounala, on the southern side of Port Bradshaw. After a while, transforming themselves into flying foxes, the brother and sister flew to Dulmumnia, on the western shore of the port, where they changed themselvs back into human beings and copulated. Both their footprints and the marks of the woman's buttocks can be seen on the rocks at Dulmumnia. Later, as flying foxes, they flew to Melville Bay, where again, transforming themselves into human beings, they lived as man and wife. The cross-hatched triangles are clouds, *binjalo*,[78] which are seen at the beginning of the wet season. In the centre is *Gurumuluna* and his sister *Baijini* and between them the waterhole, Bounala. The footmarks were made by the brother and sister when they visited the waterhole.

Plate 108A pictures *Gurumuluna* and an unidentified *Baijini* companion. The lines from their heads are ceremonial decorations, and the triangular symbols encircling the figures, wet-weather clouds, *binjalo*.

Plate 108D pictures three *Baijini* men who came to Port Bradshaw in a boat and built a house for themselves. Reading from the left, their names are *Gurumuluna*, the head man, *Wonatjari* and *Daiybari*. On the left of *Gurumuluna* is

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[76] Possibly the waterhole, Bounala, Pl. 107D.

[77] The aboriginal women wail in unison to stop the wet-season wind, *bara*, and to start the *timara* wind as did the mythical woman *Muralumangan* of Bremer Island. Pl. 136B, D; myth, p. 133.

[78] These triangular cloud symbols, probably a *mata* design, are particularly common in the *pitja* art of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, but absent elsewhere. The same symbol is present in the Celebes (Kaudern, 1944, Figs. 134-9) and may be the source of this *pitja* symbol.

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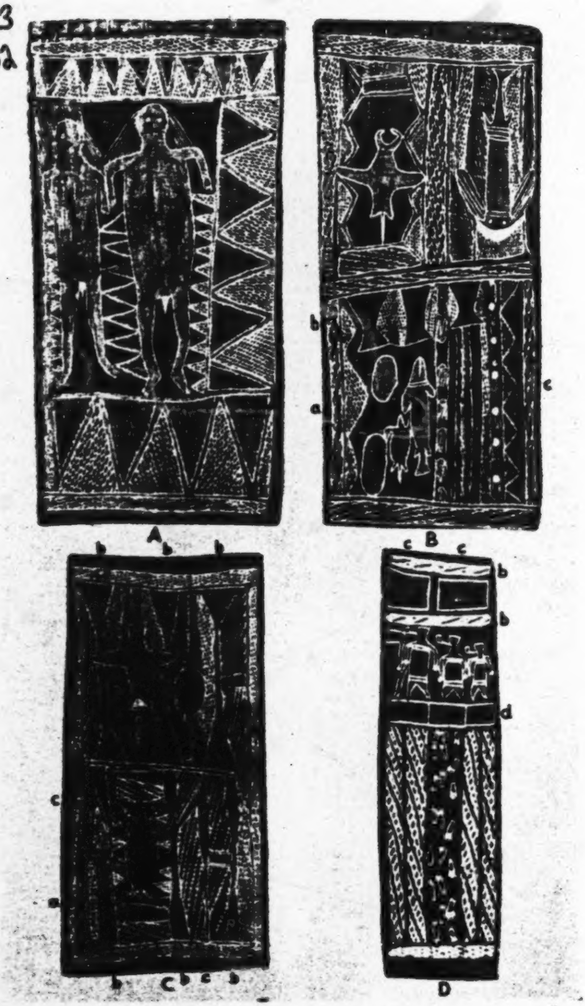

Plate 108. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, D The Baijini men B Totemic creatures, Cape Arnhem
C Totemic creatures, Port Bradshaw

*773 *532 an axe he used in the construction of his house. The six vertical lines in panel *a* are the posts of the house, made from local timber, and the cross-hatching between them, walls of plaited bamboo. The transverse panels *b*, *b*, are rafters of the roof (rectangles *c*, *c*) which were thatched with the leaves of an unidentified palm.

[777 276] The three rectangles at *d* are wells the *Baijini* men dug, and the footmarks in the central vertical panel, those made by the men during their house-building. The *Baijini* made their fire outside the house. Their pipes were similar to those used by Europeans.[79]

Spirit People

776 The spirit people, or *Mokoi* (the *dua* moiety call them *Wuna*) all appear to have been living people. At the present time, they pay occasional visits to the land of the living, where they spend most of their time in the jungles. Although the aborigines are somewhat afraid of the *Mokoi*, as indeed the *Mokoi* are of human beings,[80] I did not personally collect any evidence that they were ill-disposed toward living people. Warner,[81] however, refers to their malignant nature. We know little about the *Mokoi* and hope that later research will reveal more fully their place in the life and beliefs of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land.

The Mokoi, Rangi-rangi and Kultana, of Port Bradshaw

*773 During creation times two men, *Rangi-rangi* and *Kultana*,[82] both of them expert fishermen, came to Port Bradshaw to spear dugong. The day was so windy that the spray from the waves beating against the sides of the canoe rose into the sky, causing heavy thunder-clouds to form and rain to fall. This originated the first wet season. As soon as this happened the stingrays, heavily pregnant, travelled to the mangrove swamps to give birth to their young among the roots [825] of the trees. Since that time the young stingrays are always born among the roots of the mangroves at the beginning of the wet season.

[775] The man, *Kultana*, is now one of the *Mokoi* who sometimes lives at Port Bradshaw. It is his duty to assist the spirits of the dead during their journey from earth to the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma (p. 331).

*773 Plate 109E, F, is the obverse and reverse sides of a painted paddle.

*532 On panel [illegible] are the two men, *Rangi-rangi* and *Kultana*, in their canoe, which has since been transformed into a paper-bark tree. The cross-hatching below the canoe symbolizes the rough seas and that above the canoe, the clouds created by the spray from the waves. On panel *b* is the dugong, *balwakmeri*, with a dugong spear on either side. In panel *c* the two rain-clouds were created by the spray from the sides of the canoe. These same clouds are also painted in panel *e*.

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[79] See painted pipe, Pl. 128A.

[80] See myths of *Rangi-rangi* and *Kultana*, p. 346, and *Birikiri*, p. 348.

[81] Warner (1937), p. 73.

[82] *Kultana* is now the head man of the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma, p. 329.

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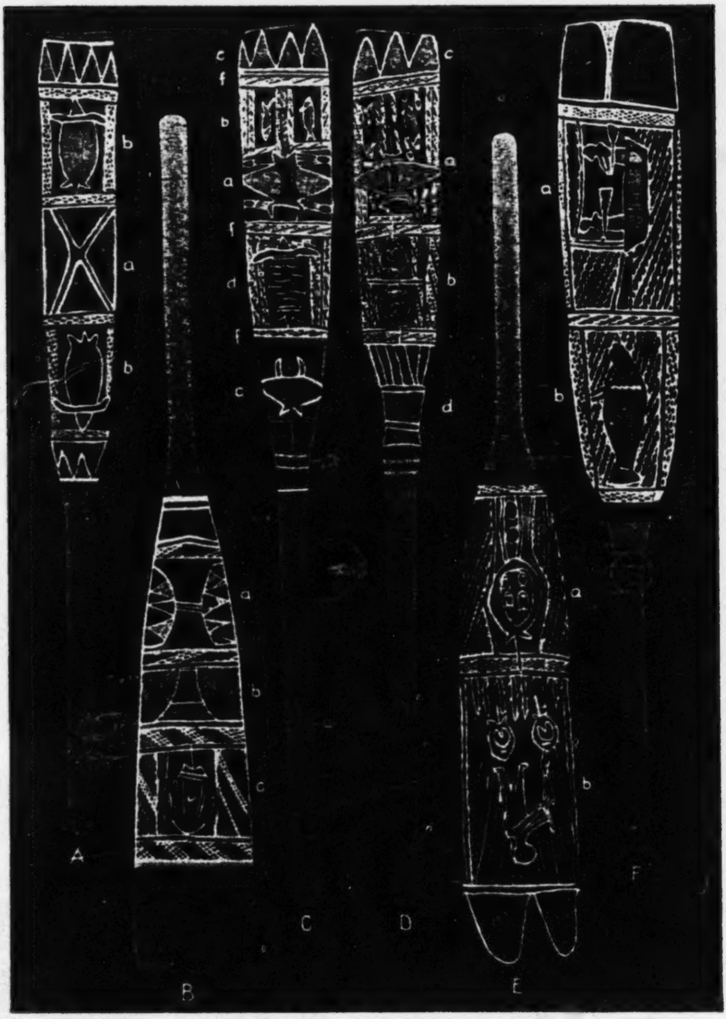

PLATE 109. Painted paddles, Yirrkalla

A The hawksbill turtle, kouwaradji
B The rain and stingrays
C, D The devil-ray and the hawksbill turtle
E The man, Maldidji, and the stingrays
F The Mokoi, Rangi-rangi and Kultana

*773 *532 Plate 109E., panel *a*, shows a pregnant stingray which, during mythical times, went into the mangrove swamps to give birth to her young among the roots of the trees. Her body has become a mangrove creek at the totemic place. The ovals at the head of the stingray, places where the stingrays used to gather, are large sand-banks called Mournourkuna. A mythical man, *Maididji*, panel *b*, is spearing stingrays among the roots of the mangrove trees (along upper edge). On either side of him are lines of falling rain created by the spray from the canoe. The transverse lines on both the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle are sand-banks at the totemic place.

Totem Creatures

778 825 In the centre of Port Bradshaw are *jiritja* totem places belonging to the turtle, the devil-ray, the trepang, the stingray, the octopus, the queen fish and the anchor of the *Baijini*.[83] The devil-ray swims round accompanied by his attendants, the octopi, and the trepang rests on the bottom. Should any aborigines inadvertently paddle their canoe over the totem places of either of these creatures, the trepang spurts up large quantities of water and the devil-ray creates huge waves which swamp the canoe and drown the occupants. The other totemic creatures are not dangerous to the aborigines of Port Bradshaw, although the turtle is dangerous elsewhere.[84]

Two paintings and two engraved paddles deal with these creatures.

778 825 *532 In the centre of the lower panel of the bark painting, Pl. 108C, is the hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, at Doria Island, near the entrance to Port Bradshaw, whose rocky cliffs are indicated by the cross-hatched triangles on either side of the turtle. The oval at *a* on the lower left is a trepang, *teripi* (*Holothuria* sp.). The devil-ray, *mulara*, is in the upper left with the octopi, *mainda*. In the upper right is a stingray, *barindjinou*, also accompanied by octopi. The designs *b*, *b*, *b*, are the ribs and planks of a wrecked *Baijini* boat, and *c*, *c*, a *Baijini* anchor, now a sand-bank.

Plate 110B also refers to the totemic creatures and places of Port Bradshaw. Reading from the top, in the right panel is a *Baijini* anchor, a trepang, *teripi*, a hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, and another trepang. The left panel is occupied by the devil-ray, *mulara*, and four queen fish, *tinimbu*.

The aborigines engraved three paddles, the designs of which dealt with the *jiritja* totem creatures of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw. Fig. 58A, B, pictures one of the paddles, C and D the second, and E and K the third.

The four upper bands, *a*, on E, are the open sea. Below, at *b*, and at *d*, are queen fish, *tinimbu*. The central transverse band *c* is an arm of the sea, the triangles above being the wet-season clouds created by the devil-ray, *mulara*, and those below, rocks on the shore of Doria Island, the home of the devil-ray, whose body is now a large rock, panel *e*, below the surface of the water. The two rows of triangles in panel *f* are more wet-season clouds and the transverse bar between

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[83] See myth of the *Baijini*, p. 331.

[84] See myth of turtle, p. 117.

them, the lower dark-coloured edge of the clouds before they discharge their rain. 778
Panel *g* is occupied by the *jiritja* hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*. 825

On the reverse side, K, *a* refers to the open sea, and the row of small triangles 532*
below, small clouds resting upon it; *tinimbu*, the queen fish, is in panel *b*. The devil-ray, *mulara*, is at *c*, also surrounded by cloud symbols. At *d* are more cloud symbols, and at *e*, another engraving of *mulara*.

The engravings on the obverse side of the companion paddle, C, deal with the devil-ray, *mulara*, and the turtle, *kouwaradji*, and on the reverse side, D, with the turtle only. On C, *mulara*, the devil-ray, is in panel *g*, surrounded by the clouds which he creates when anyone goes near his home in Port Bradshaw. The transverse bands, *f*, *h* and *m*, are rough seas made by him at the same time as the clouds. Near the head of *mulara* is a queen fish, *tinimbu*. At *j* is the hawksbill turtle surrounded by rocks, and at *n* and *k* are thunder-clouds which have discharged their rain.

On the reverse side, D, the cross-hatched bands, *a*, *c* and *f*, represent the rough seas made by the turtle, *kouwaradji*, when he is disturbed because the aborigines have approached his home. The triangles on panel *b* are the clouds, *taul*, caused by the water the turtle blows into the sky, and the two triangles, *e*, the wind that originates in those clouds. The hawksbill turtle is at *d*, the triangles on either side of him being rocks near his totemic place.

Whilst on a canoe journey with the aborigines, I noticed that one of their paddles was covered with engraved designs. At the completion of the journey the aborigines traded this paddle, Fig. 58A, B, to me and explained the designs, all of them referring to the *jiritja* totemic creatures and natural features of Port Bradshaw.

Fig. 58A, B shows the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle. In panel *a* of A is the devil-ray, *mulara*, two hawksbill turtles, *kouwaradji*, and two queen fish, *tinimbu*. At *b* is a thunder-cloud created by *mulara*, and along the sides and above *b*, in the form of triangles, a number of smaller clouds.

The reverse side, B, shows panel *c* occupied by another thunder-cloud with smaller clouds, triangles, along its sides. The triangles in panel *d* indicate spent thunderstorms.

(b) CAPE ARNHEM

Mythical Human Beings

Bonolo-bonolo and his Wives at Cape Arnhem

A mythical *jiritja* man, *Bonolo-bonolo*, and his two wives, *Mambuno* and 773*
Warungil, once lived at Kunbalbala, near Cape Arnhem. *Bonolo-bonolo* was an expert hunter of both the animals and the hives of wild bees. In the middle of 773*
a saline flat at the totem place of *Bonolo-bonolo* was a wooden penis. This was 222
the penis of *Bonolo-bonolo*. Until recently, when anyone in the vicinity was going 798
to search for the hives of wild bees, he first visited the wooden penis and, striking [532*]
it with a branch, said:

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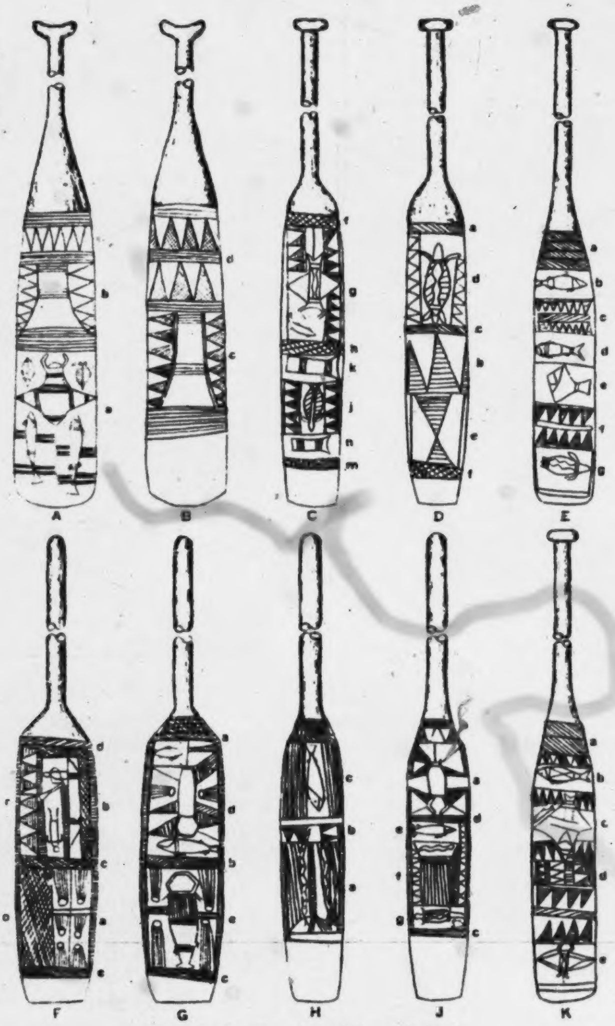

FIG. 58. Engraved paddles, Yirrkalla
Totemic creatures, Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw

THE ART OF YIRRALLA

'Make my eyesight keen so that I can see the flight of the bees.' 222 773* 788

This ritual enabled the hunter to see the bees and to follow their flight more easily,[85] because of *Borolo-borolo's* ability to do so during mythical times. Even though, at the present time, the wooden penis is no longer in its totemic place, the aborigines still visit the same spot and repeat the formula, which they say still makes their eyesight much clearer.[86]

Borolo-borolo's wife, *Mainbuno*, was also expert in locating the wild yam, *jakwa*, and every place in which she once dug for them is known. Today, the women visit these places and, putting their digging sticks on the spot where *Mainbuno* had dug previously, say, 'Brr' in a low voice. After that, they find many *jakwa* yams.

Two paintings, a painted wooden penis and a bark figure (not published) illustrate the myth. 773* 532*

On Pl. 110A is *Borolo-borolo* walking through the grass, with his hand shielding his eyes from the sun as he watches the flight of a wild bee towards its hive. On the left is an emu and a wallaby which ran away when they saw *Borolo-borolo*, and on the right the three yams, *jakwa*, which *Borolo-borolo's* wife, *Mainbuno*, had created. The tubers are at the top of the painting and their foliage is at the bottom.

Plate 110C is a duplicate of the wooden penis of *Borolo-borolo* which the aborigines made for me and on which they painted the design of the yam, *jakwa*.

Plate 110D[87] pictures *Borolo-borolo* with his two wives, *Mainbuno* and *Wurungil*.[88] *Borolo-borolo* is setting out to hunt kangaroos and emus and his wives to collect *jiritja* honey, the female, *barangit*, which burns the mouth, and the male, *kamo*, a pleasant-tasting honey. *Mainbuno* is in the upper position, and *Wurungil* in the lower. Below the family is a forest of stringy-bark trees (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*). The cross-hatched panels on the right represent the wild honey collected by the women, the three dark-coloured areas being *barangit* and the light-coloured ones *kamo*.

Spirit People

Five bark paintings and an engraved paddle deal with the spirit people, the 776 *Mokoi*, some of whom travel regularly from Nalkuma, the *jiritja* heaven, to their 532* totemic place on the southern side of Cape Arnhem[89] so that they can spear 775 dugongs, turtles and fish to provide the inhabitants of Nalkuma with food. Two others, the woman *Wulu-wulu* and the man *Kultana*, visit Port Bradshaw so

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[85] The method of locating the hives is to watch the direction of the flight of the bees, an exacting task, for the insects are little larger than the common house fly.

[86] This is, to some degree, an increase centre. The penis of *Borolo-borolo* is also an example of the care that must be taken before attaching an erotic significance to any representation of the sex organ.

[87] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

[88] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 41, Pl. 5A, figure and describe a wooden trumpet or drone tube associated with *Borolo-borolo* and the yams.

[89] Map, Fig. 57.

[text continues on p. 345]

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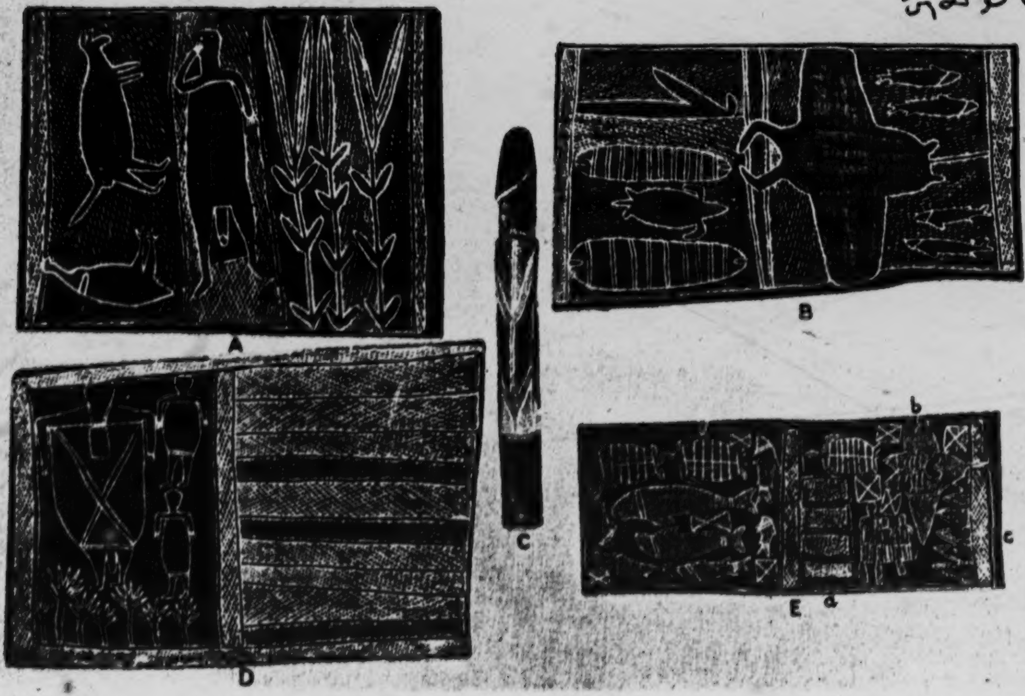

PLATE 110. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The man, Borolo-borolo B Totemic creatures, Cape Arnhem C The penis of Borolo-borolo
D Borolo-borolo and his wives E The Mokoi and the turtle hunt

that they can help the spirits of the newly dead on their journey to Nalkuma, 776
Wulu-wulu giving them the bean of the *menin* tree,[90] a passport into the *jiritja* 532*
heaven, and *Kultana* assisting to paddle them across the sea to their future 775
home.[91]

The Mokoi and the Turtle Hunt

Plate 110E is the story of a turtle hunt by some of the *Mokoi* who had paddled 773*
in a wooden canoe from Nalkuma to Cape Arnhem, and the incidents connected
with the hunt. 532*

The three *Mokoi* paddled through rough water (four cross-hatched rectangles, 776
a, on left of right-hand panel) to reach a group of rocks (squares with diagonal lines at *b*) so that they could spear the turtles living among those rocks. On their way the spirit-men saw a devil-ray, *b* (*Daemonata alfredi*).[92] The large gills are shown as slits, and the fat within the body as a crescent. In the left panel are dugongs, *merinjunga*, feeding on the submarine grass, *gumata*. The fish are *tinimbu*, queen fish, and squares with diagonal lines, rocks in the sea frequented by the turtles, upper edge.

The Mokoi and the Dugong, Merinjunga

Two mythical dugongs, *merinjunga* (*Dugong australis*), which once lived in the sea at Cape Arnhem were continuously being pursued by the *Mokoi* who came from the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma. The *Mokoi*, however, were not always successful because, just as they were about to spear the creatures, a storm would
develop and allow the dugongs to escape.[93] Later the canoe was transformed
into a large rock on the sea coast between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, [823]
and the dugongs into a rock in the water near by. The place of the stingray, which also appears in the painting, is a hole in the ground. When travelling in their canoes the aborigines will not go near the totemic place of the dugong, for if they did the dugongs would send up so much smoke and fire that they would be destroyed.

On the land, near this totemic place, is a paper-bark tree, once a dugong, 778
which resembles that creature in appearance, and near by is a termite mound 789
also a transformed dugong. When the aborigines wish to increase the supply of
dugongs at a particular locality they take a branch from the dugong tree and a 825
piece of earth from the termite mound and throw them both into the fire. When the wood is burnt to ash the men take the heated termite earth from the fire, pound it into dust, mix it with the wood ash and throw the mixture into the sea where the dugongs feed. This dust from the totemic tree and the termite mound will create many dugongs in that locality.[94]

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[90] Pl. 108C. [91] Myth, p. 331.

[92] This huge, cumbersome but harmless sea-creature sometimes reaches a length of fifteen [136]
feet and a weight of a ton.

[93] Dugongs can only be captured on windless days when the sea is calm. [225]

[94] This increase ritual is not unlike that carried out at the increase centre for parrot-fish [171]
at Winchelsea Island, p. 84.

776 There are two bark paintings illustrating the dugong hunt at the totemic
*773 place of the *Mokoi*, between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw.

Plate 111A shows two *Mokoi* in a canoe hunting four dugongs. The black line
*532 between the two lower dugongs is the long dugong spear. The white cross-hatching in this panel indicates the rough seas which allowed the dugongs to escape. The upper and lower left-hand panels, *a* and *c*, are sand-banks near the totemic place of the dugongs and *b* is a mythical stingray. By burying itself in the sand the stingray has clouded the water so much that it has the appearance of smoke, indicated by cross-hatching.

Plate 111D deals with the same totemic place as the previous painting. On the lower right are two *Mokoi* in their canoe, and below them three queen fish, *tinimbu*. In the left-hand panel the four dugongs are being hunted by the *Mokoi* and on the upper right is the upturned canoe of the hunters, now a large rock on the seashore. Cross-hatching, as before, indicates rough seas which prevented the capture of the dugongs.

The Mokoi, Delururu, Rangi-rangi and Kultana

[616 Two brothers, *Delururu* and *Rangi-rangi*, accompanied by *Kultana*, who
775] carry the spirits of the *jiritja* dead to their heaven, left Nalkuma in their canoe, *Lampu*, and paddled to the totemic place of the *Mokoi* at Cape Arnhem to spear dugongs. They had captured several and were resting on the beach when they saw a mortal man searching for turtle eggs. This gave the party such a fright that they hurried back to their canoe and paddled homeward as quickly as possible.[95]

In the centre of Pl. 111B are three *Mokoi* in their wooden canoe, called *Lampu*,[96] who have just speared a dugong. Reading from the left, their names are *Delururu*, *Rangi-rangi* and *Kultana*. The cross-hatching around the dugong is the rough sea water and the triangular patterns, *a*, the cumulus clouds created by the serpent, *bilumbira*. Above the canoe are five queen fish, *tinimbu*.

The Mokoi, Jambula and Bulanuna

Two *Mokoi*, a father, *Jambula*, and his son, *Bulanuna*, went to sea in their canoe, called *Tamalania*,[97] and speared a hawksbill turtle. This they took to a locality at Cape Arnhem, cooked and ate it. The canoe and the turtle are now parts of the topography of the coast of Cape Arnhem.

At *a*, on the right-hand panel of Pl. 111C, is *Jambula*, left, and his son, *Bulanuna*, returning to land with the turtle they have captured lying in the bottom of the canoe. An octopus and two queen fish are in the same panel.
[177 When, in still weather, these queen fish jump out of the water they cause the

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[501] [95] This is a myth similar to that of *Birikiri* depicted on the engraved paddle, Fig. 58F.

[96] Wooden canoes are *jiritja* and bark canoes *dua*. This conforms to the custom of the
616] aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land of placing all modern objects in the *jiritja* moiety and the ancient ones in the *dua*. The canoes of the spirit people all have special names.

[551 [97] The aborigines have personal names for themselves, their dogs and their canoes.
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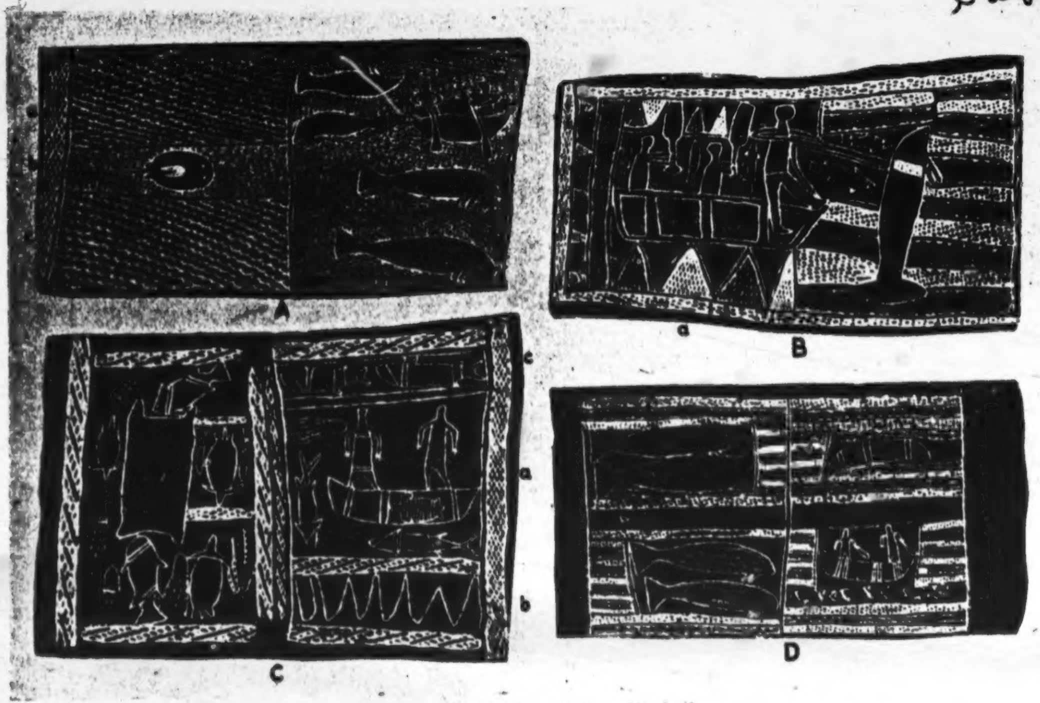

Plate 111: Bark paintings, Yirrkalla
The Mokoi and the turtle hunt

776 clouds to form, shown on panel *b*, and rain to fall. In panel *c* are two more
*773 queen fish. The rectangular design in the centre of the left-hand panel is an
*532 unidentified place, called Waitjundudu, situated under the water near Cape
Arnhem. Near by are two queen fish, three turtles and seven octopi.

The Journey of the Mokoi, Birikiri, to Cape Arnhem

There was once a spirit man (*Mokoi*) called *Birikiri*, who left Nalkuma to
[778] capture some dugongs and paddled to the totem place of the *Mokoi* on the southern side of Cape Arnhem. On his arrival *Birikiri* felt tired, so he pulled his canoe up on the beach, lay down on the warm sand and went to sleep. When he awoke he saw, to his dismay, a mortal man, an aboriginal called *Junbulu*, coming toward him. He rushed to his canoe but in his fright became so confused that he had great difficulty in launching it. Finally he succeeded and, paddling through the rough breakers, reached Nalkuma in safety.

Figure 58F, G illustrates both the obverse and reverse sides of the engraved paddle.

In panel *b* of F is *Birikiri* who, having just arrived from Nalkuma, has pulled his canoe up on the beach, the cross-hatched panel below. Above the canoe is *Birikiri* asleep on the sand, the sand being indicated by the long rectangle beneath him. There are six octopi, called *kwidilir*, in panel *a*. Cross-hatched transverse panels, *c*, *d*, *e*, and the area *o*, represent the stormy water through which *Birikiri* paddled his canoe to escape from *Junbulu*. At *r*, the triangular designs are clouds left in the sky by the *Mokoi*.

The reverse side of the paddle, G, deals with some of the totemic creatures associated with Cape Arnhem, all of which have become natural features. In the centre of panel *d* is a devil-ray with octopi on either side. There is a queen fish above and below. The hump-backed whale, *morokundja*, is in panel *e*,
[825] surrounded by four octopi. These octopi are the friends of both the whale and the devil-ray. Transverse panels *a*, *b* and *c* refer to the stormy seas through which the *Mokoi* paddled and the short lines around the border of the paddle, reefs some distance from the shore.

Totem Creatures

*773 Three bark paintings and three decorated paddles illustrate one or more of
778 the totem creatures of Cape Arnhem.
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The Totemic Creatures at Marawina, near Cape Arnhem

The upper cross-hatched panel of Pl. 106B[98] is the open sea. Below, at *a*, is the devil-ray, *mulara*, and his friends, the octopi, *mainda*. At *b* is the constellation of Tjirilpan, Orion and the Pleiades,[99] with a rock cod, *kouper*, on each side of the constellation. In panels *c* and *d* are six clouds. Rain is falling from the two clouds on the right. In the bottom left-hand panel, *e*, is a crocodile,

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[98] Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.

[99] See astronomy, Pl. 157D.

baron, a stingray, *kawangalk-miri*, two hawksbill turtles, *kouwaradji*, and the turtle rocks shown in Pl. 110E. In panel *f* there are two stingrays. 773* 778

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The Queen Fish, Tinimbu, the Turtle, Kouwaradji, and the Octopus, Mainda

The upper panel of Pl. 106C contains four octopi, *mainda*, and a turtle, *kouwaradji*, and in the bottom panel three queen fish, *tinimbu*, and a number of octopi. The figure at the lower left, to which two octopi have attached themselves, and on which one of the queen fish is resting, is an unidentified totemic rock on the bottom of the sea between Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem.*

The Whales, Welerria and Morokundja, and the Stingray, Kawangalk-miri, at Cape Arnhem

In the early days, two mythical whales[1] lived in large caves at the bottom of the sea at Cape Arnhem. The male was called *welerria*, and the female *morokundja*. They had as a companion a stingray, *kawangalk-miri*. At the close of the creation period the whales and the stingray went into the sky and are now portions of the Milky Way near the contellation of Orion. [821]

The first figure to the left of Pl. 106D is the female whale, *morokundja*, the next is the male, *welerria*, and the third the stingray, *kawangalk-miri*. The two dark-coloured rectangles, *a* and *b*, at the upper right and left, are caves at the bottom of the sea where the whales once lived. The white cross-hatching is sea-water and the darker-coloured cross-hatched panels, water which was clouded by the stingray when it was feeding along the bottom. The parallel lines above the heads of the whales symbolize the water parting as they swam and the white triangle on their heads, their blow-hole.

Totem Place of the Devil-ray, Mulara, and the Whale, Morokundja, at Nantjaka, Cape Arnhem

On the upper left of Pl. 108B is the devil-ray, *mulara*, surrounded by panels of triangular designs representing clouds. On the upper right is a whale, *morokundja* (most likely *Megaptera australis*).[2] The cross-hatching surrounding the whale indicates the disturbance it creates as it swims through the water.

On the left, at *a*, are two oval rocks, the haunts of the hawksbill turtles and sailfish, *kunderunga*, shown to the right of the rocks.

The three triangular designs, *a*, and the three anvil shapes, *b*, above them are clouds. Reading from *c* at the right edge, the subjects of the panels are: sea-water, a panel of clouds, a line of octopi, sea-water and another line of octopi. Nantjaka, at Cape Arnhem, is the totem place for all the creatures represented in the painting. Interpretation by F. M. Setzler. [823]

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* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXVI.

[1] Warner (1937), p. 365, describes the totemic dance of the whale in the *jiritja narra* ceremonies of the Murngin tribe.

[2] This whale later went into the sky and became part of the Milky Way near the constellation of Orion, Pl. 157D. [821]

The Hawksbill Turtle, Kouwaradji

*773 A giant *jiritja* hawksbill turtle, called *kouwaradji*, lives at Talaoi, a totemic
778 place at the bottom of the sea, but close to the shore of southern Cape Arnhem.
825 This turtle is greatly feared and in general his camp is strictly avoided. Should,
however, an aboriginal unwittingly paddle his canoe over *kouwaradji's* camp, the
*532 turtle becomes annoyed and either creates waves so large that they upset the
canoe and drown the occupant, or blows water into the sky to create heavy
[821] thunderstorms, so that they will destroy the intruder.

Kouwaradji, however, does not always drown the offenders. Sometimes he takes them under the water for a time and then allows them to come to the surface again. Although this experience makes the aborigines 'silly' for some weeks, they finally recover.

In the centre of the painted paddle, Pl. 109A, at *a*, is Talaoi, the camp of the hawksbill turtle. The black triangles are flat rocks at the totemic place, and the light-coloured triangles, coral rocks. Above and below at *b*, *b*, is the hawksbill turtle. The groups of triangular designs at the top and bottom of the paddle blade are the thunder-clouds created by the turtle when he becomes annoyed.

The Dugong, Merinjunga

When the dugong, *merinjunga*, is disturbed by the aborigines paddling a
canoe over his camp at Nangata (at the bottom of the sea, between Cape Arnhem
[821] and Port Bradshaw) he becomes annoyed and blows up so much smoke and fire
that it destroys the intruders and causes heavy rainstorms to fall. As soon as this
happens, the stingrays travel into the mangrove swamps to give birth to their
young.[3]

Plate 109B shows the painted paddle, both sides of which are decorated similarly. The design in panel *a* is a large rain cloud created by the dugong, and the triangles on either side, smaller clouds. The dark-coloured triangle in panel *b* is a thunderstorm and the cross-hatching on either side, the rain falling from it. Similar cross-hatching in panel *c* also indicates the falling rain, which causes the stingray, centre, to go to the mangrove swamps.

The Devil-ray, Mulara, and the Hawksbill Turtle, Kouwaradji

Plate 109C, D pictures the obverse and reverse sides of the painted paddle. On panel *a* of C is the devil-ray, *mulara*, surrounded by octopi, *kundilir*. In the two panels, *b*, are queen fish, *tinimbu*, and above them again, at *c*, the clouds made by the devil-ray, *mulara*, when he becomes annoyed. The cross-hatched panels on either side are flat rocks at his totemic place near Cape Arnhem and the transverse cross-hatched panels, *f*, *f*, *f*, the waves breaking over those rocks. At *d* is the hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, accompanied by his attendants, the octopi, *mainda*.

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[3] This myth is similar in this respect to that of the dugong and the mythical men, p. 315.

On the reverse side, *a* is the devil-ray, *mulara*, surrounded by octopi. At the 773*
top of the same panel are two queen fish. At *b* are two *jiritja* stingrays, *dulamou*, 778
the cross-hatched panels surrounding them representing the sand-banks near
their totemic place. There is a wet-season cloud, *barawal*, at *c*, created by the 825
serpents, *bilumbira*, and at *d* the same clouds when the rain is falling. 532*

The bottom of all *jiritja* paddles are similar in shape to this example. For the shape of the *dua* paddle, see Fig. 58A, B.

On this paddle, 58H, J, are engravings of the devil-ray, queen fish, crocodile, stone fish and the serpents, *bilumbira*.

On J, *a* is the devil-ray, the triangles at its tail picturing broken cumulus clouds after they have shed their rain. At *e* is the queen fish, *tinimbu*, and at *f* a wet-season cumulus cloud with rain falling from its lower edge. This cloud was created by the serpent, *bilumbira*, who can be seen travelling in it. The triangles on either side are small broken cumulus clouds. At *g* is a crocodile, *barou*, and a stone fish, *kaunbiriunja*. The transverse panels, *b*, *c*, *d*, picture rough seas, and the short lines surrounding the whole design, reefs in the sea at Cape Arnhem.

The designs on H refer to the *bilumbira* serpents hanging from the branches of the *menin* trees at Cape Arnhem after having caused the wet-season thunderstorms to form.[4] In panel *a* are two *bilumbira*, shown upside down, hanging from the branches of a *menin* tree. The male is on the left. The triangles at *b* are small clouds also created by the serpents. The queen fish, *tinimbu*, in panel *c*, is associated in some unidentified way with the northerly wind, *lunguruma*,[5] indicated by the parallel lines on either side of the fish. When the *lunguruma* wind is blowing there is a plentiful food supply.

The Serpent, Bilumbira

The serpents, *bilumbira*, are highly coloured, dangerous creatures, with long projecting teeth. They are reputed to be over fifty feet in length. During the dry season the *bilumbira* live in a group of submerged rocks, called Daliwa, on the sea floor between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw. Should anyone paddle near by, the *bilumbira* will rise to the surface and with their long teeth destroy the canoe and its occupants. Another *bilumbira* totemic place is on the north side of Cape Arnhem.

When the wet season starts, the *bilumbira* leave their home at the bottom of 821
the sea and make the large thunder-clouds, in which they travel. The aborigines
believe that the thunder is their voice and the lightning their tongues. The aborigines claim that during the wet season there are always thunder-clouds over the home of the *bilumbira* at Cape Arnhem.

Plate 112D shows a serpent travelling in a thunderstorm. On either side are young thunderstorms 'growing up', to use an aboriginal term. At the base of the 'young' thunderstorms, at *a* and *b*, the cross-hatching indicates falling rain.

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[4] See Pl. 112C.

[5] See Yirrkalla winds, p. 133.

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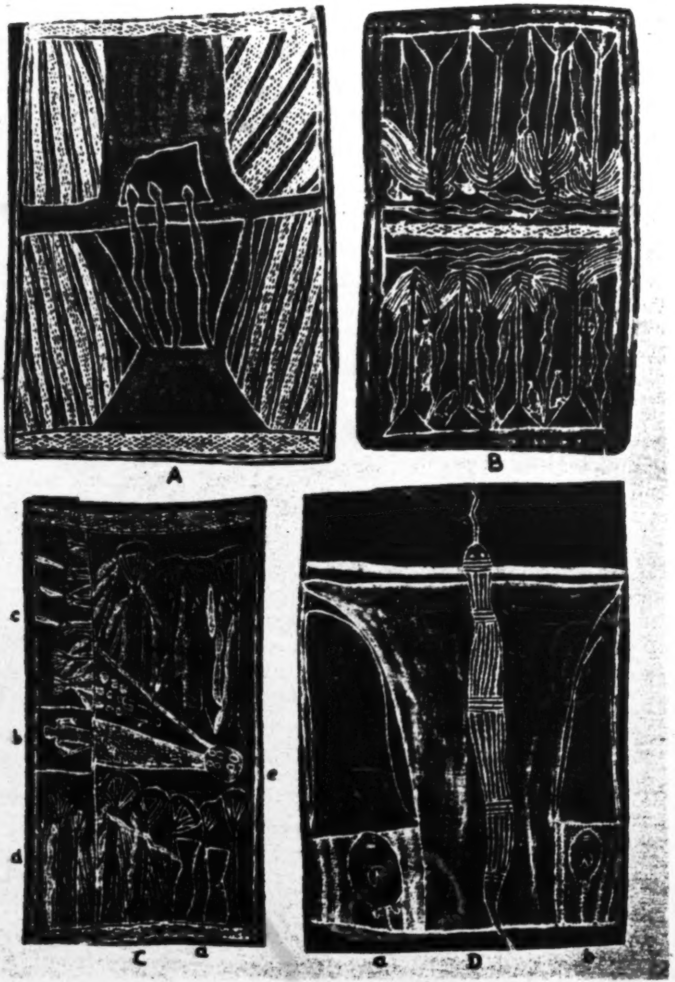
A
B
c
b
e
d
C
a
a
D
b

PLATE 112. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla
The serpent, biḷumbira

The two stingrays, shown in the centre of the rain, are travelling to the mangrove swamps to give birth to their young.[6] 773*

Plate 112A is another painting illustrating the myth of the *bilumbira*. The 778 main features above and below the central line are two large thunderstorms in 825 which three serpents are travelling. The parallel lines of cross-hatching in the 532* four corners of the painting depict the falling rain.

Plate 112B deals with the totemic place of the *bilumbira* on the northern side of Cape Arnhem. In the lower panel are *menin* trees, and at their base four jungle-fowls (*Megapodius reinwardt*) scratching up their mounds.[7] Hanging from the branches or flying through the air are a number of the *bilumbira* serpents. The human figures are *Mokoi*.[8]

The upper panel shows similar trees with jungle-fowl mounds at their base, and birds, presumably jungle-fowls, in the branches. As in the upper panel, there are serpents flying through the air or hanging from the branches.

Plate 112C is an elaboration of the previous painting, the upper and lower right-hand panels referring to the same trees and serpents as those shown on B. In the lower right, at *a*, the two square-topped designs with the serpent entering from the left indicate the submerged rocks at Daliwa, the dry-season home of the *bilumbira*. The upper and lower left-hand panels, *c* and *d*, show additional trees with mounds at their base and, presumably, jungle-fowls in their branches. On the centre left at *b* is a *Mokoi*. The triangular section in the centre of the right-hand side of the painting refers to the swamp lands on the coast adjacent to the totemic place of the *bilumbira*. In the lower section of the triangle are unidentified birds and in the upper section, a *Mokoi* lying down, and near by a group of circles representing some unidentified fruit. More fruits are shown in the circle at *e*.

(3) ANIMALS AND BIRDS

The Hawk-man, Wabula, and the Butterfly-girl, Bounba

The hawk-man, *Wabula*,[9] was without a wife. One day when he was feeling 773* particularly lonely he came across a camp of butterfly-people, *Bounba*,[10] sitting 825 under the trees. *Wabula* was attracted by the eldest sister, resting in a special hut on one side, and made plans to capture her for his wife. Going to a nearby beach, he caught a number of lobsters, called *maitka*, cooked them and, wrapping some of them in paper-bark, returned to the camp of the butterfly-people, and offered them to the eldest sister. As she came forward to take the food

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[6] Myth, p. 340.

[7] The jungle-fowls, by their calls, attract the *jiitju* spirits of the dead to a forest near Port Bradshaw; from there, the spirits set out on their journey to the *jiitju* heaven. Myth, p. 329. [775]

[8] These spirit people, *Mokoi*, have a totemic place on the southern side of Cape Arnhem.

[9] In another myth the hawk, *wabula*, is associated with the native cat. See p. 357.

[10] According to Warner (1937), p. 424, the butterfly, *burn-ba*, is closely associated with the morning star, *barnumbir*, and lives on the top of it. [821 825]

*773 825 *Wabula* caught her by the wrist and, carrying her to his bark hut in the forest, blocked up all the openings so that she could not escape.

The girl, *Bounba*, afraid and lonely, cried all the night for her father, *Jumundik*,[11] to help her. He, being a skilled magician, had a spear-thrower with which he could perform many wonders. The first time he rubbed it, a heavy wind sprang up which shook the bark hut so much that cracks appeared everywhere. By rubbing his spear-thrower the second time, *Jumundik* transformed his daughter into a butterfly so small that she was able to escape through one of those cracks.

When *Wabula* awoke in the morning and found that *Bounba* had escaped, he changed himself into a hawk, so that he could live in the same element as the girl.

*773 *532 Plate 113A pictures the story of the hawk-man, *Wabula*, and the butterfly girl, *Bounba*. In the upper left-hand corner, at *a*, the eldest sister is resting within her hut, shown as a crescent. The five human figures immediately below are her brothers and sisters of varying ages, the upper two being infants. The designs on the left lower edge, at *b*, are the lobsters, *maitka*, which *Wabula* caught to entice the girl from her hut. Reading from the left, the first three and the sixth are complete lobsters, the fourth has its claws removed, and the fifth is the parcel of cooked lobsters which *Wabula* wrapped in paper-bark to give *Bounba*. Immediately to the right of number six is the man, *Wabula*, taking hold of the wrist of the girl, *Bounba*, as she reached for the parcel of lobsters.

Within the triangle on the upper right, at *d*, is the bark hut of *Wabula*, in which the hawk-man (upper) and the butterfly-girl (lower) are asleep. On the lower right at *c* is the girl's father, *Jumundik*, rubbing his special spear-thrower. This spear-thrower not only created the storm which caused the openings in *Wabula*'s bark hut (one is shown as a dark line on the left-hand side of the hut), but also transformed his daughter into a butterfly so that she could escape.

Wabula is depicted as a hawk on the upper right of the painting and *Bounba* as a butterfly immediately below him.

The Echidna-man, Tjiramuna, and the Plovers, Tjutju

One day, a long, long time ago, a flock of plover-men, *Tjutju* (*Lobibyx miles*), were hunting in the forest a few miles south of Port Bradshaw when they saw their enemy, the echidna-man, *Tjiramuna* (*Echidna aculeata*), and his wives asleep beside their camp-fire. Taking advantage of this, the plover-men sneaked up quietly and threw so many spears into the body of the echidna-man that he died. Next morning, however, *Tjiramuna* returned to life and, seeing that the spears of the plovers had grown into his skin, he transformed himself into an echidna. When the plover-men, *Tjutju*, saw what a grotesque, clumsy creature their enemy, *Tjiramuna*, had become (see sketch of an echidna, Pl. 62C), they

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[776] [11] *Jumundik* is also in charge of the *dua* heaven, Djiwain, of the Milingimbi people, p. 328. The link between *Bounba*, the morning star, *banumbir*, and the *dua* heaven is of interest.

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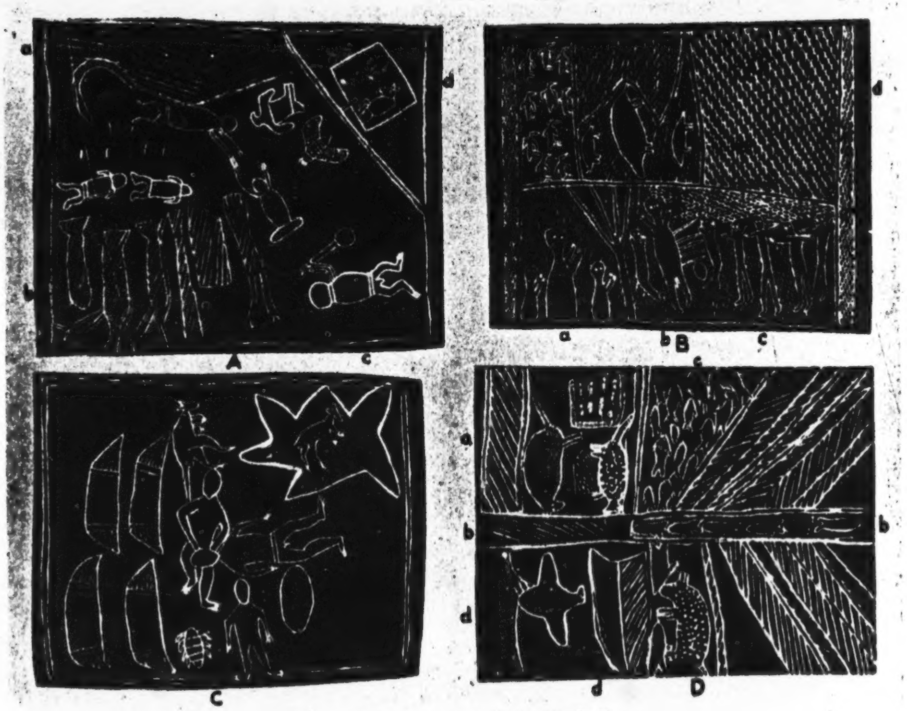

PLATE 113. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The hawk-man, Wabula, and the butterfly-girl, Bounba
C The wallaby, Moutia, and the cockroach, Borok
B The echidna-man, Tjiramuna, and the plovers, Tju-tju
D The native-cat man, Baracuma, and the hawk-man, Wabula

*773 *532 changed themselves into plovers and flew to another country so that they would not meet him again. The totemic place, Niliala, of the echidna is now a line of rocky cliffs on the sea coast, a few miles south of Port Bradshaw.

The painting, Pl. 113B, is divided into two parts. The lower relates to the mythical story of the plover and echidna-men of creation times, and the upper to the present-day creatures.

In the lower left-hand corner, at *a*, is the echidna-man, *Tjiramuna*, and his two wives. At *b*, they are asleep under a tree, shown to the left. At *c* are the plover-men, *Tjutju*, casting their spears at the unfortunate echidna-man. The small oval to the lower right of the dead echidna-man is his camp-fire. In the upper portion of the painting, the echidna and his two wives, in black, occupy the central panel, and the plovers are on the extreme left. The cross-hatched area *d* indicates the rocky cliffs of the totem place, Niliala, of the echidna-man.

The Wallaby, Moutia, and the Cockroach, Borok

*773 This myth explains how the sea became salt, the origin of the swamps in Arnhem Land, the jungle wallaby and the cockroach.

823 During creation times a wallaby-man, *Moutia*, and his wife, *Borok*, lived near Melville Bay. One day the couple filled four bark dishes with water from the sea, which in those days was fresh, and placed them in the jungle to keep cool. *Moutia* then asked his wife if she would remove some of the vermin from his hair. She agreed and, with the head of *Moutia* in her lap, spent some time at the task. When she had finished she asked *Moutia* if he would do the same for her, but he refused very rudely, saying that he was too tired and wanted to sleep. This so infuriated the woman that she quarrelled violently with her husband. Then, to punish him further for his discourtesy, she waded into the sea, their only source of fresh water, and urinated to make it salt.

But, so that she would not suffer hardship from her own action, *Borok* transformed herself into a cockroach (probably a terrestrial *isopod*).[12] When the husband, *Moutia*, saw what had happened he, in turn, changed himself into a wallaby and hopped to Meleton Island in Melville Bay.

Borok, in her anger, had thought to deprive her husband, and, consequently, the rest of creation, of fresh water. But her plans for vengeance miscarried because she had forgotten the four bark dishes filled with fresh water which she and her husband had left in the jungle. That water was transformed into the extensive swamps of eastern Arnhem Land, the source of many of the rivers which flow into both the Gulf of Carpentaria and the sea on the northern coasts of Australia.

*773 *532 The four boat-shaped objects on the left of Pl. 113C are the bark dishes which *Moutia* and his wife filled with water and placed in the jungle. In the centre of the painting is *Moutia* with his head in the lap of his wife, and on the

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[12] This creature, which lives under bark on dead trees in the jungles, is able to exist on the moisture gathered from its environment.

bottom edge is his wife, *Borok*, urinating in the sea. Beside her is the cockroach 773*
into which she later transformed herself. On the upper right the leaf-shaped 532*
design symbolizes Meleton Island in Melville Bay, where the wallaby made its
home. The oval near the right knee of the wallaby-man, *Moutia*, is a totemic 823
rock associated both with him and his wife. 778

The Native-cat man, Baracuma, and the Hawk-man, Wabula

In the early days of the creation period, a native-cat man, *Baracuma*, who 773*
lived near Blue Mud Bay, owned the only fishing net in the world. It was so good that, whenever he cast the net into a nearby stream, he caught, in a short time, all the fish that he required.

One afternoon he decided that, instead of fishing in the river, he would go to a nearby lagoon. Again he caught many fish, and had just spread them out on green leaves, preparatory to cooking them, when his friend, *Wabula*, the hawk-man, paid him a visit. On seeing so many fish, and hearing about the excellence of the net, the hawk-man asked *Baracuma* to lend it to him. But *Baracuma* demurred, explaining that his life was so intimately associated with the net that it it were out of his hands for any length of time he would die. *Wabula*, however, assured *Baracuma* that he ran no risk whatever, because even if he, *Wabula*, were unsuccessful in his fishing, he would bring the net back in time. The native-cat man, *Baracuma*, persuaded against his will, allowed the hawk-man to take his net away.

But the fish were so numerous that *Wabula*, not realizing the truth of the story about the intimate association between *Baracuma* and his net, continued to use it, even though he could hear the distressed *Baracuma* calling out. When at last *Wabula* returned the net to its owner he was, from all appearances, dead. When *Wabula* threw the fishing net over the native-cat man, however, its contact gave him strength, and he slowly revived.

After that distressing experience the native-cat man refused to lend his net to anyone, even though *Wabula*, in particular, pestered him day after day, always promising to return it quickly. One day *Baracuma*, sorry because *Wabula* was hungry, lent him the net, but impressed upon him the urgent need for its speedy return. Remembering that his thoughtlessness had almost killed his friend, the hawk-man returned the net quickly. After that *Wabula* kept his contract so well that *Baracuma* gradually lost his fear of lending it.

Then one day, when the fishing was not good and *Wabula* was hungry, he continued in pursuit of a particularly large fish, even though he knew he was exposing his friend *Baracuma* to great danger. But when, on capturing the fish, *Wabula* returned the net he found that his greediness had killed the native-cat man, for on that occasion not even winding the net round *Baracuma's* body would bring him back to life. A kangaroo-man, who had seen the whole incident, transformed the dead *Baracuma* into the native-cat and *Wabula* into a hawk.

*773 Before he died, however, *Baracuma*, incensed at being robbed of life by the selfishness of the hawk-man, decreed that from that time onward not only *Wabula*, the hawk-man, but the whole of creation, once dead, would never come to life again.[13] Previous to that decree everything and everyone died but for a short while, then returned to life to continue another cycle of their existence.

[825] The white spots on the fur of the present-day native-cat (*Dasyurus* sp.) were once, according to the myth, splashes of light-coloured mud which the fishing net had spattered over *Baracuma's* body.

*773 Plate 113D illustrates the native cat and hawk myth with considerable detail. In the upper left-hand panel, *a*, is the native-cat man covered with splashes of *532 mud from his net. Between his feet is a cone-shaped figure which represents the fishing net. The square above is the oven where *Baracuma* cooked the fish. The other creature within the panel is the kangaroo-man, who later transformed *Baracuma* into a native-cat and *Wabula* into a hawk. The horizontal central design, *b*, depicts the stream in which the native-cat man netted the fish, and the diagonal lines on each side, subsidiary creeks flowing into the main stream. In the triangle *c*, on the upper edge of the painting, are some of the fish netted by *Baracuma*.

The meeting of *Baracuma* and *Wabula* at the lagoon is illustrated in the lower panel, *d*. The native-cat man, with his spotted skin, is shown again at the right of the panel. In front of him are two fish he caught in the lagoon. On the left of the panel is the hawk-man, *Wabula*. The cone-shaped design between *Wabula* and *Baracuma* is a rock where the latter rested.

Plate 114A is an example of the individualism of the aboriginal artist, for although the underlying myth is the same, this representation differs greatly from the work of the previous artist.

The central design of this painting is the fishing net; the human figure to the right is *Baracuma*, the native-cat man, and to the left *Wabula*, the hawk-man. The five fish at *a*, lower right, belong to *Baracuma*, and the five fish at *b*, lower centre, to *Wabula*. The kangaroo-man, who was responsible for transforming both *Baracuma* and *Wabula*, is shown above the net. The cross-hatched areas indicate the stream and paper-bark swamps at Blue Mud Bay.

Frogs, Garakman, at Milungwira Swamp

Except that this painting, Pl. 114B, is associated with Milungwira, few other details were gathered. An examination of Pl. 121C, however, shows the cormorant, in black, resting on a rectangle, with the fish, *bildu*, above it. There are four frogs, *garakman*, in the lower, and one in the upper panel.

The lines and cross-hatched panels below the frogs indicate rain made by the creatures.[14]

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[13] This is similar to the decree laid down in the moon myths.

[825] [14] In Arnhem Land and Melville Island the frog is always associated with rain.

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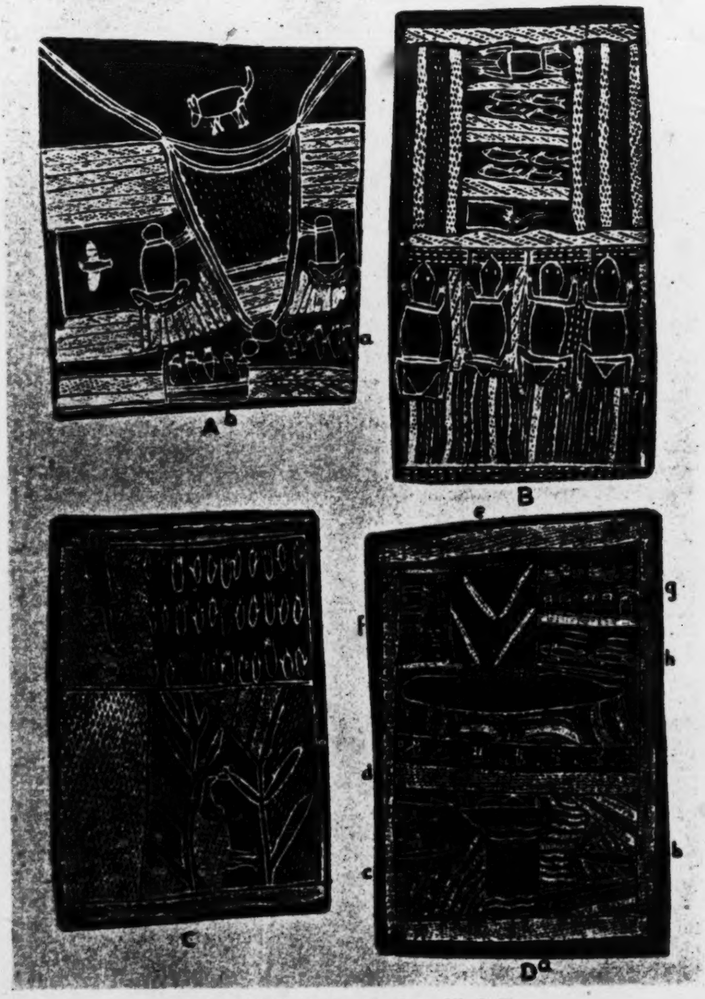

PLATE 114. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The native-cat man, Baracuma, and the hawk-man, Wabula
B The frogs, garakman C A hunting scene D Creatures at Bartalumba

A Hunting Scene

224 *532 This bark painting, Pl. 114C,[15] illustrates the experiences of an aboriginal who went out to spear kangaroos near Biluitja, a place about four miles west of Yirrkalla. In the upper right-hand are the lines of paired footprints of men and kangaroos. Whilst chasing the kangaroos, the hunter saw an emu, *kadbarait*, standing in the grass (cross-hatching), eating the blossoms from a low shrub, called *wari*, and further along, a fresh-water goanna, *bije* (upper left), running through the grass (cross-hatching).

Creatures at Bartalumba, Groote Eylandt

*532 Plate 114D[16] pictures the country adjacent to the Bartalumba headland, western Groote Eylandt.

Reading from the bottom, the anvil-like figure in the middle of panel *a* is a large cloud over the Bartalumba hills; bottom right is a diagonal line of birds, and above them at *b*, small clouds and rain. On the lower left edge at *c* are seven casuarina trees, with three pigeons above them. Over the central transverse cross-hatched panel, *d*, is another line of birds. The main anvil-shaped design at *e*, in the upper panel, is a cumulus cloud with rain (cross-hatching) falling from its lower edge. There are four cycad palms at *f*, in the upper left, with three pigeons roosting in the branches and three grasshoppers in flight. In the upper right, *g* is another group of cycad palms, and below them at *h*, two women, [482] *Nabililangu* and *Wurati-laku*,[17] with their carrying-baskets (rectangles) and digging sticks beside them.

Kangaroos, Emus and Goannas

136 *532 There is no mythological story associated with the two bark paintings, Pl. 115A, D. They depict kangaroos, emus and goannas in every-day surroundings.

In the upper panel, Pl. 115A, is a kangaroo lying in the shade of a tree, after it had eaten a meal from the leaves of a yam, depicted as torpedo-shaped designs to the right of the creature. At *a* and *b* are two similar plants. The cross-hatched vertical band between them indicates a well-worn track made by other kangaroos. The kangaroo footmarks to the left are newly made.

Plate 115D shows a number of creatures which live round a lagoon called Doraka, situated several miles west of our base camp at Yirrkalla. Doraka lagoon is the oval in the centre, and above is a number of male and female emus and their tracks. In the lower left are two red kangaroos, the paired tracks of one of them being shown in the extreme lower left. On the lower right are four fresh-water goannas, *bije*.

The Whale, Dianmeri

*773 225 This myth tells about three aboriginal fishermen, a whale and the death of one of the fishermen.[18]

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[15] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.
[16] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.
[17] See carved figure of *Wurati-laku*, Pl. 135C, D; myth, p. 436.
[18] These men were distant relatives of *Mauwulan*, the artist who produced this bark painting.

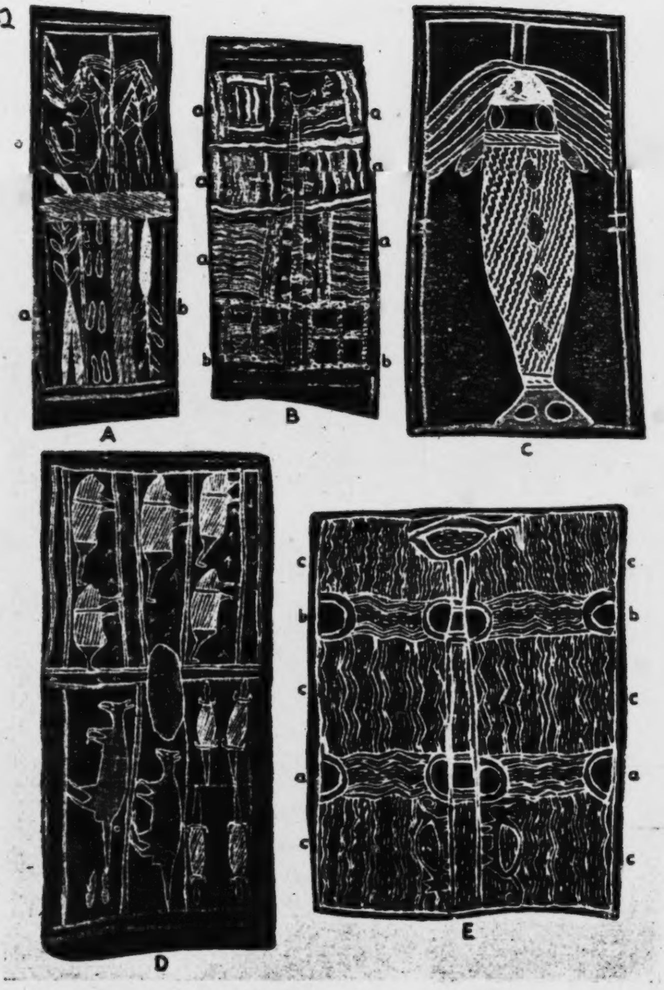
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PLATE 115. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, D Kangaroos, emus and goannas C The whale, dianmeri
B, E The night-bird, karawak, and and the opossum, marungo

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225 The three aborigines, having between them made a new rope and spear, set out in a canoe to capture a turtle. They speared one, and hauled it to the surface, but were unable to pull the turtle close enough to the canoe to kill it. One of the aborigines had just jumped overboard to push the turtle within reach of his companions, when two large whales surfaced, one on either side of the canoe, almost swamping it. The men in the canoe, fearful of what might happen to
[501] their companion, told him to swim under the canoe, and enter it over the stern, the usual way. But when he did so he dived into the mouth of one of the whales. As the creature surfaced, the aborigines saw the legs and buttocks of their companion protruding from its mouth.

Although the first reaction of the two fishermen was to paddle from the scene of the tragedy, they soon came back in the hope that they could retrieve the body. But they did not and had to return to camp to tell the sad news. Next morning, however, two boys, when looking for turtle eggs, found the body cast up on the beach.

136 The bark painting, Pl. 115C, represents what is probably the hump-backed whale, which is known to frequent the waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria. The
*532 aborigines described this whale, which they called *dianmeri*, as a large fish, considerably longer than a canoe, which floats on the surface of the sea, a characteristic of the hump-backed whale. The curving lines on either side of the head represent the water parting as the creature swims along the surface, and the ovals down the central part of the body, the light-coloured skin markings of
[825] this whale. According to my informants the whale, *dianmeri*, has two mouths in its tail, shown as ovals, with which it takes hold of a canoe to capsize it.

The Night-bird, Karawak, and the Opossum, Marungo at Cape Shield

*773 During mythical times the night-bird, *karawak* (unidentified) lived by himself at Milingimbi. One night, feeling lonely, he flew to the top of the tree in which he lived and called out to an opossum, *marungo*, whose home was in a hollow tree at Djerakoi, Cape Shield, near Blue Mud Bay, to come over and talk to him. But the opossum did not even reply. *Karawak* then flew to the Wessel Islands, then to Arnhem Bay and then to Cape Arnhem, at each place asking the opossum to pay him a visit, but the opossum made no sign of even having heard the night-bird. Finally *karawak* flew to the hollow tree at Cape Shield, the home of the opossum, and settling on the upper branches, again repeated his request. As soon as it was dark, the opossum left his nesting hollow and, climbing to the top of the tree, talked with *karawak* the whole night long. When, however, the first light of dawn came in the sky, the opossum descended the tree and went to sleep in a hollow limb. From that time until now, the night-bird, *karawak*, calls at night, the only time that the opossum will leave his home in the hollow tree and talk to him.

THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

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Two bark paintings, a ceremonial message stick[19] and a staff,[20] used in the *karawak* totemic rituals, were made by the Yirrkalla aborigines.

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The central design on Pl. 115E is the totemic hollow tree at Djerakoi, Cape Shield, with *karawak*, the night-bird, sitting on top of it. The black semicircles at *a*, *a*, and *b*, *b*, and similar designs on the trunk, are openings in the hollow tree, the home of the opossum, *marungo*. At dusk the opossum leaves the opening, *a*, climbs the tree and, entering *b*, keeps *karawak* company during the hours of darkness. At the first sign of dawn the opossum leaves *karawak* and, descending the trunk, enters the hole *a* and goes to sleep. On the right is the opossum ascending, and on the left, descending. The short white marks on the trunk of the tree are the scratches made by the claws of the opossum as he climbs up and down. The meandering lines on panels *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, indicate marks in the mud at the base of the totemic tree made by the opossum, *marungo*, the ghost crabs, *gunjun*, and an unidentified lizard, *gainurrena*. In some undetermined way these three creatures are associated in the myths.

On Pl. 115B the tall vertical figure in the middle of the painting is the hollow totemic tree at Djerakoi on which *karawak* seated himself to talk to the opossum. Flying round *karawak* are five cicadas. A number of opossums are shown ascending the tree after dark and descending when dawn breaks. The short white lines indicate the scratches made on the tree by their claws. The upper six panels of wavy lines, *a*, *a*, *a*, *a*, *a*, *a*, represent the footmarks of the opossums as they walked round the totemic tree. The circles at the corners of the square, *b*, are the holes of the crabs, *gunjun*, which followed the opossum to the tree, and the lines joining the circles are the tracks made in the sand by the crabs as they walked from one hole to another.[21] In the squares, *c*, on the lower left are four dingoes. The surrounding designs are the paths of the dingoes, and the dots are their tracks.

The Dugongs, Merinjunga

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Two bark paintings deal with the fragment of a myth about some mythical dugongs (*Dugong australis*) which once lived at Bartu, near Cape Wilberforce. One of the dugongs was killed by a mythical man, *Oramula*.

In Pl. 116C the large dugong, *merinjunga*, is dead. The broken lines on his head are the maggots crawling from his body, and the cross-hatched bands, the strips of meat, as they are cut from the animals by the aborigines. There was no explanation of the cross-hatched background. Interpretation made by F. D. McCarthy.

Plate 116A shows a male and a female dugong, *merinjunga*, at Gongora, near Cape Wilberforce. The cross-hatched panels leading from their heads represent submarine grass, the food of the dugongs. The vertical panels, *a*, symbolize the ripples on the water and the bubbles coming to the surface as the creatures feed on the sea bottom.

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[19] Fig. 65A, B.
[20] Pl. 134E.
[21] Myth, p. 298, and design of the crabs, *gunjun*, on bark painting, Pl. 115F.

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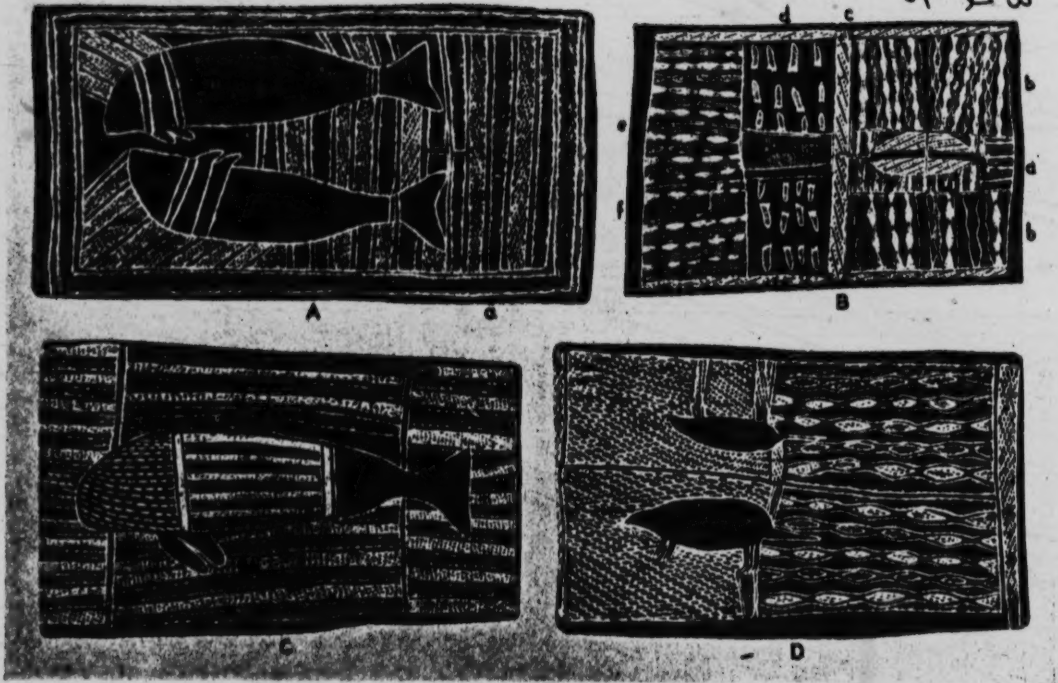

PLATE 116. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, C The dugongs, merinjunga B, D The bandicoot, warni-kura, and fire

The Bandicoot-men, Warnt-kura

During mythical times the bandicoot-men, *Warnt-kura*, made a nest at Bian- 773*
bian-bui, close to the Gainmaui River where *Wirili* and his companions allowed their camp-fire to set fire to the countryside.[22] Although the fire destroyed the nest of the bandicoots, the creatures themselves escaped destruction by running away. The place where the bandicoot made his nest is now an open plain, in 823
the centre of which is a lagoon filled with large paper-bark trees. According to the myth, the fire is still burning under the water of the lagoon, although no one can see it.

Plate 116D shows two bandicoots, *warnt-kura*, in their burning nest at Bian- 773*
bian-bui. The lines of lozenges represent the bush-fire and the cross-hatched 532*
left-hand panel, smoke from the fire.

On Pl. 116B the bandicoot is on panel *a*, with panels of fire, *b*, *b*, on either side of him. The bands between the lozenges indicate the charcoal and ashes. The cross-hatched panel, *c*, is a dry watercourse near the totemic place of the bandicoot. At *f* is the man, *Munijui*, who was associated with the bush-fire on the Gainmaui River; the flames of fire are indicated on the left-hand panel. The footprints are those of the men at the ceremonial ground.

The Geese, Wurumatji, at Duwalaila Swamp

During creation times large flocks of geese, *wuyumatji*, once lived on the Duwalaila swamp east of Arnhem Bay. Their food was the bulbs, *rakia*, of the spike rush.

One day, when they were feeding in the middle of the swamp, *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man, passing overhead in a cumulus cloud, called out (thundered) so loudly that the geese took fright and flew to another swamp on the mainland south of Milingimbi, where they have remained ever since.

Plate 128C is a painted ceremonial object associated with the mythical geese. The cross-hatched vertical panels, *a*, *a*, *a*, are low hills near the Duwalaila swamp, and the circles, waterholes in the bottom of which (indicated by dots) are white stones and *rakia* bulbs. The transverse lines, *b*, *b*, *b*, *b*, are streams of running water and the horizontal lines on both the right- and left-hand panels, aboriginal roads between the waterholes.

This design, belonging to the *jambakbinwa mata* of Arnhem Bay, was painted on the body of a *dua* initiate before initiation (see body painting, Pl. 129D).

(4) REPTILES

The mythical serpent occupies an important place in the beliefs and the 773*
ceremonial life of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, as, indeed, it does, or did, 825
throughout the whole of aboriginal Australia.[23]

The beliefs surrounding the serpent *jurlungur*, which swallowed the *Wawalik* sisters, went into the sky and caused great floods,[24] forms the bases of the most

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[22] Myth. p. 293, Pl. 93B.

[23] Brown (1926), p. 24; Mountford (1948), p. 115.

[24] Warner (1937), ch. ix.

*773 important ceremonial cycles in Arnhem Land. The serpent *aitja*,[25] the dominant
825 ancestor in the *arawaltja* ceremony of Groote Eylandt, also created many waterholes and rivers, finally inhabiting his last creation, Jara-ama water.

Serpents in one form or another live in most of the important waterholes in Arnhem Land; others live in the thunderstorms and, travelling between the clouds, occasionally strike the earth beneath with their tongues. These serpents, under many names, are invariably associated with water, and sometimes with
[821] the rainbow.[26] They are usually highly coloured, like the rainbow, are of huge size, and often have a mane and a beard. In a few localities along the north coast of Arnhem Land, however, the heads of some serpents resemble a block of weathered stone. The mythical serpents of Arnhem Land are always dangerous to strangers who go near their waterholes, and even to those aborigines who do not perform the proper rituals before they approach the sacred places. In the Yirrkalla area a number of mythical serpents, living in the thunder-clouds, belong to rain, lightning and thunder.

The Lightning Snake, Wununga

*773 The lightning snakes, *wunungga*,[27] who live in the sky during the wet season,
825 can often be seen passing from one cloud to another in the form of lightning. During the dry season the *wunungga* take on the form of one of the dangerous
821 snakes of the jungle, who, before they bite an aboriginal, eat the leaves of the *menin* vine to make their venom more deadly. The young of the *wunungga* also live in the jungle, but when adult they, like their parents, go into the sky during the rainy season.

*773 Plate 117A shows two *wunungga* snakes passing from one cloud to another.
*532 The light grey figures at the top of the painting are three thunder-clouds, from the bottom of which rain is falling (parallel cross-hatched lines). The thick black vertical band, *a*, in the lower panel represents the wet-season wind, *bara*.

Plate 117C shows three *wunungga* snakes in a jungle, eating the leaves of the *menin* vine. The triangular symbols on the borders represent the clouds in which the snakes live. The three serpents have their heads in the branches of the *menin* vine (central design).

The Crocodiles, Baron, at Caledon Bay

*773 In early times the crocodiles, *baron*, left the Roper River country and travelled northward until they reached the swamps at Blue Mud Bay. As these
825 were extensive and well stocked with food, most of the crocodiles decided to remain there. Some of them were not satisfied with the conditions at Blue Mud Bay so, accompanied by the blanket lizard, *baltjira* (*Chlamydosaurus kingii*), they

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[25] Myth, p. 27.

[26] Warner (1937), p. 511, relates a myth about a serpent which causes floods and whose body is the rainbow.

[27] See painted sacred object of the serpent, *wunungga*, Pl. 134A. The serpent *wunungga* is also present in the myths and ceremonies of Milingimbi, p. 447.

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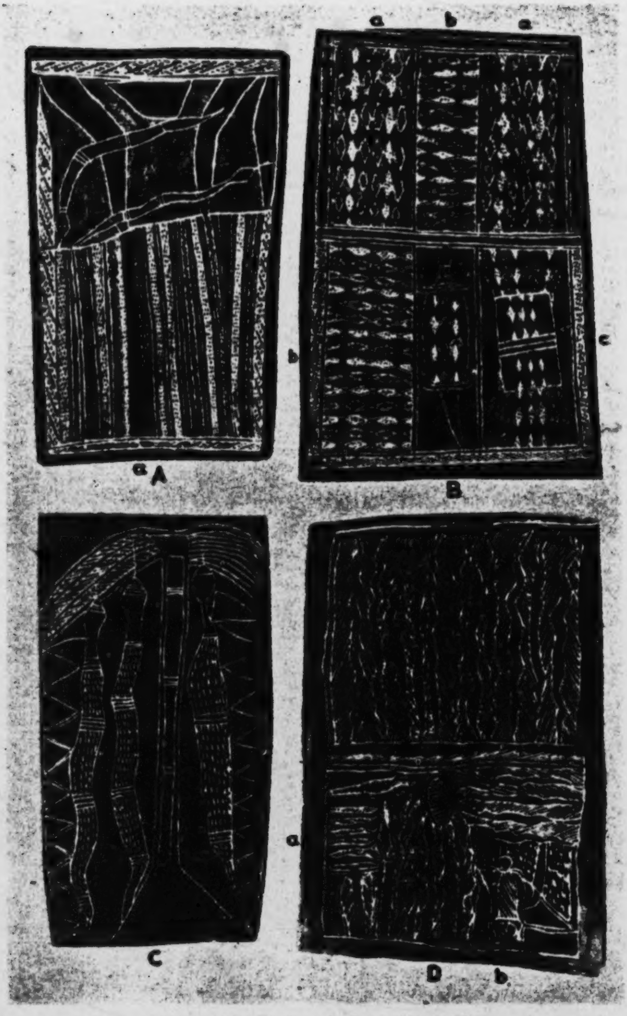

Plate 117. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla
A, C The snakes, wunungu B The crocodile, barou
D The snakes, Tjutjulili Swamps

*773 825 journeyed northward until they reached the Kariatpa swamps[28] at Caledon Bay. These were so full of fish that the reptiles decided to make it their permanent camp. Being cold and uncomfortable the crocodiles, with the aid of the blanket lizard, made a fire and were just sitting down to warm themselves, when a little bird, *djiriku*, came along and asked if he could join them. But he had no sooner stretched out to get warm than the fire exploded, scattering embers everywhere. This gave the creatures a great fright; the *barou* dived into the water and even today, as crocodiles, seldom come to land; *baltjira* changed himself into a lizard and ran up the trunk of a tree; and the little bird, *djiriku*, was burnt so badly that his feathers are now a reddish-brown colour.[29] The fire went underground but the smoke, according to the aborigines, still rises from a hole in the ground near the Kariatpa swamps.[30] *773

825 One engraved pipe and a bark painting deal with the myth of the crocodile, *barou*. The pipe is described elsewhere.[31]

*532 Plate 117B illustrates the crocodile and its nest at the Kariatpa swamps of Caledon Bay. The vertical lines of lozenge shapes, *a, a*,[32] are leaves of the spike rush, and the horizontal lines, *b, b*, the places where the crocodile pushed the grass aside as it walked through the swamp. On the lower right, at *c*, is the crocodile's nest covered with grass. The lozenges within the nest are eggs and those at each end the grass which the crocodile pulled over the nest to hide its eggs.

The Dua Snakes of the Tjutjulili Swamps of Trial Bay

*773 825 [616] At the beginning of time, all the dangerous snakes belonging to the *dua* moiety lived in a cave situated on an open plain called Tjutjulili, near Trial Bay. They had as their leader a female snake, *dunbania*, who is now the tiger snake.

On the seashore near by there was a tribe of peaceful fish people who gained their living from the sea. One day, before they went to an adjacent mangrove creek to fish, they put some crabs to cook on the fire. When later they returned to camp, tired and hungry, they found that the *guladjuru*, called the 'dogs' of the snakes, had taken the food from the fire and eaten it. The fishers were so annoyed that they tracked the 'dogs' and killed them. When the snakes heard of this, they were most indignant and, arming themselves with spears, set out, with the tiger snake woman at their head, to punish the fish people. They, being unaware of the danger that threatened them, were easily surrounded and killed. Later, however, the fish people came to life again and changed themselves into the *dua* fish that now live in the sea, the barramundi, the parrot fish, the rock cod and many others. At the same time, the home of the *dua* snakes was transformed into the Tjutjulili swamps, where many of the snakes still live and which others visit periodically to renew their venom by drinking its waters.[33] 773* 825

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[28] Map. Fig. 57.

[29] Mountford (1948), p. 26, records a Pitjendadjara myth which states that the present markings of many of the small desert birds and reptiles are the result of burns received in a bush fire.

[171] [30] See myth of the bandicoot and fire. There is also an Aranda myth of Central Australia which states that smoke issues from the ground at a place west of Alice Springs where there had been an extensive bush-fire during creation times. Similarly, in the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia the myths relate how, after the snake *akurra* rose from the summit of Mt Pitten, the mountain has given out smoke ever since. As there are no active volcanoes in Australia, it may be that these myths are a tribal memory of seismic activity with which the aborigines were associated in the long distant past. Mountford (1937, 1942), field notes.

[31] Engraved pipe. Fig. 59C. [32] This is a *gumaitj mata* design. Fig. 61N.

Two bark paintings deal with the snakes at the Tjutjulili swamps. 773*

In the upper panel of Pl. 117D[34] are the *dua* snakes of Tjutjulili. On the upper right of the lower panel the same snakes, *dunbania*, the tiger snake, *balaru*, the grey snake, *witi*, the black snake, *pangu*, the mangrove snake, *napili*, *naimerlu*, *garnunga*, *malara-korup* and *lutia*. On the left at *a* are the goannas, the *guladjuru*, the 'dogs' of the serpents. In the lower right at *b* is *Oijal*,[35] the boomerang man, with his honey baskets on one arm and a boomerang in his left hand. The panels of short lines above represent the rain created by *Oijal*. His association with the *dua* snakes is not known. 825 532*

On Pl. 118F, *dunbania* the tiger snake and *uwaroko* (unidentified), accompanied by the blue-tongued lizard, *bungalong*, are travelling to the Tjutjulili swamps so that they can drink its water and thus strengthen their venom before they bite the aborigines.

The upper cross-hatched chevron design is the Tjutjulili swamps. The three short snakes are the *dunbania* and the seven longer ones the *uwaroko*. The blue-tongued lizard occupies the central position.

The Jiritja Snake, Barodji, at the Koolatong River

In *bamun* (creation) times the snake, *barodji*, accompanied by his wife, left the Rose River country[36] and travelled northward until he reached Naiori, near the present-day Koolatong River. Until *barodji*'s arrival there were no natural features at Naiori. *Barodji*, however, made rain which filled all the swamps, lagoons and fresh-water streams emptying into the Naiori swamps. After that the mythical snake created a number of the groups of men and women who now live in the vicinity of Blue Mud Bay, the *mangilili*, the *wonguri*, the *gumaitj* and the *gubabringu*. To each of these groups[37] he gave a special design which they must use in the ceremonies. 424

The central transverse panel, *a*, of Pl. 118E is a bamboo swamp at Naiori and the panels *d*, *d*, *d*, *d*, extensive lagoons at Naiori. A fresh-water stream flows along the lower central vertical cross-hatched panel *c*, to the bamboo swamp at *a*, and another along the upper cross-hatched vertical panel *b*, entering swamp *a*. These swamps and streams were all created by the snake, *barodji*.

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[33] Myths, p. 300.

[34] Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.

[35] Myth of Oijal, p. 292, and bark painting, Pl. 92D.

[36] Map, Fig. 1.

[37] This is a parallel myth to that of *Banaitja* and *Laitjun*, p. 279, explaining the origin of some of the *jiritja* groups of Blue Mud Bay and their specific designs.

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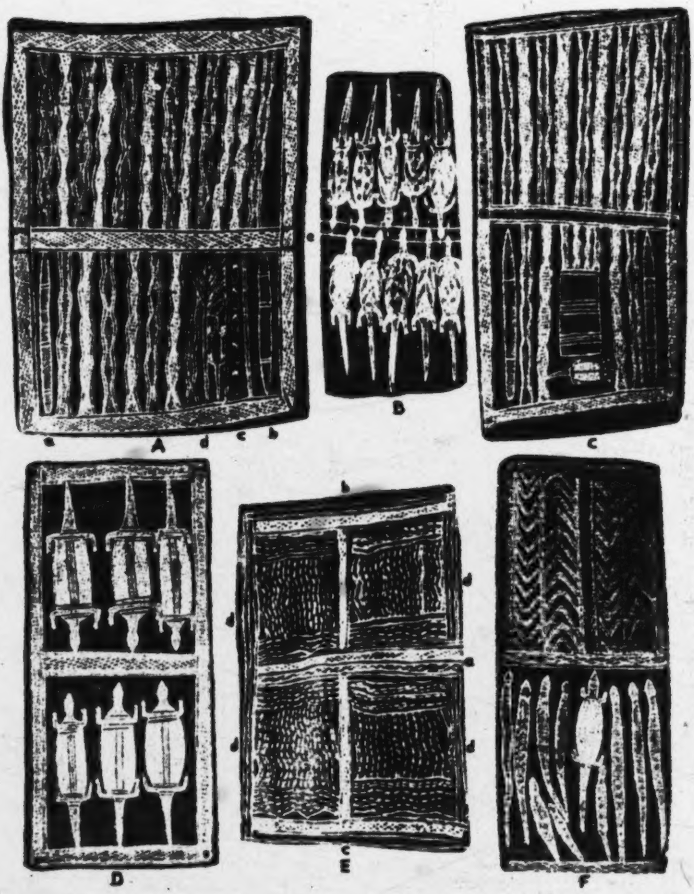
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PLATE 118. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, B, C, D The goanna, bije E The swamp, Naiori
F The snakes, Tjutjulili Swamps

The Fresh-water Goanna, Bijr, and Yellow Ochre

At Gurunga, Caledon Bay, the mythical fresh-water goannas, *bijr*, when 773*
digging out their nesting burrows, discovered both black and yellow ochres. 825
During creation times a *jiritja* mythical man, *Wirili*, also excavated the ochres
with a digging stick. When the men of the *jiritja* moiety go to Gurunga to collect 532*
these ochres they must approach the totemic place by crawling along the ground 317
and, while digging out the ochre, use only a special ceremonial stick, called 778
kainina. 481

On Pl. 118A the vertical lines of lozenge-like designs[38] symbolize the yellow ochre at Gurunga. At *a*, and *b*, in the lower panel, are two digging sticks, *kainina*, which in mythical times were used only by the man *Wirili* and today only by the men of the *jiritja* moiety when digging for ochre. *Wirili's* tracks are shown at *c*, on the lower right. In the next panel, *d*, is a large tree, *gūnjo*, in whose branches a night-bird, *karawak*,[39] is eating the fruit of the tree. Beside the trunk of the tree is the fresh-water goanna, *bijr*, which once dug for ochre in the same place as the man, *Wirili*. The central cross-hatched band, *e*, is a hole in the cliff where *Wirili* was unsuccessful in his search for ochre.

Plate 118C shows the goanna, *bijr*, at the bottom of the painting. Above and on either side of the reptile the designs represent the black and yellow ochres. The two ceremonial digging sticks are shown on the extreme right and extreme left of the lower panel.

Plate 118D pictures six mythical fresh-water goannas, *bijr*, which lived at Gurunga, Caledon Bay.

Plate 118B is a bark painting from Milingimbi which depicts ten fresh-water goannas, *bijr*, at Gurunga. This painting is included to show the stability of this totemic design over a wide area.

The Fresh-water Tortoise, Mimala, at Kulwitji Lagoon, Koolatong River

The *jiritja* mythical fresh-water tortoise, *mimala*, has a number of totemic 778
places in north-eastern Arnhem Land. One myth, engraved on a smoking pipe,
Fig. 59D, deals with *mimala* at Calabaibai, south of Milingimbi. Others deal with a painted coffin, Pl. 105B (*mimala* at Milingimbi); a painted bull-roarer, Pl. 144A, B (*mimala* at Diawirinja, west of Arnhem Bay); a Milingimbi bark painting, Pl. 126A (*mimala* at Jaraga, a forest area near Arnhem Bay), and the subject of this painting from the Kulwitji lagoon on the Koolatong River. The most complete myth is that associated with the engraved pipe, p. 391.

This painting, Pl. 119A, deals with the totemic lagoon of *mimala* at Kulwitji. In panel *a* is the fresh-water tortoise, the meandering lines at its tail being the wake it creates when swimming. The diamonds and dots occupying the rest of the panel are the bubbles rising to the surface of the water as the tortoise feeds

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[38] This is one of the designs of the *gumaitj mata*, Fig. 61M.
[39] Myth of *karawak*, the night-bird, and the opossum, p. 362.

*773 along the bottom of the lagoon. Panel *b* deals with the time when the wet-season 825 floods submerged a hive of wild bees near the totemic place of the tortoise. Many *532 of the bees were drowned and both they and the honey floated on the surface of the water. The dots represent the drowned bees, and the diamonds the honey from the submerged hive. The patterns on panels *c* and *d* are the leaves of the spike-rush, *norik* or *rakia*.

[227] The parallel white lines on *e* symbolize the fish trap constructed by *Laitjun*,[40] a type of trap still employed to capture a fresh-water fish called *paipinja*.

(5) Fish

The Shark, Mana, at Blue Mud Bay

When the *dua* shark, *Mana* (tiger shark, *Galeocerdo* sp.) was a man he tried to establish a camp at Arnhem Bay, but was speared by *Borolo-borolo*[41] because the latter did not want any strangers near him. *Mana* ran across country to Blue Mud Bay, transformed himself into a tiger shark and tried to live in a fresh-water swamp. But it was far too shallow for his comfort, so he travelled to the sea coast, where he met an old man tiger shark with whom he has lived ever since.

[824] *Mana's* body is now a large white-barked eucalyptus tree in the swamp where he first tried to live. *Mana* the shark continues to live in the sea. This apparent contradiction is not unusual, p. 33. A carved figure, Pl. 132A, illustrates this myth.

Plate 119B pictures the totemic swamp of *Mana*, near Blue Mud Bay.* At *a* is the tiger shark, *Mana*, and at *b* his companion. The wavy lines at their tails symbolize the wake.[42] In the upper and lower panels, the squares[43] on either side of the sharks indicate the fallen leaves of an unidentified palm tree floating on [226] the surface of the water.[44] At certain times of the year the aborigines make a fish trap by blocking the entrance of a watercourse leading into the swamp with these leaves, and driving the fish into it.

Turtles and Fish

Plate 119C depicts the ocean.[45] The upper and lower left-hand panels *a* and *b* show two *dua* green turtles, *gariwa*, in the rough water indicated by the groups of curving lines. On the lower right at *c* are two seagulls, *nurula*, in flight, two dolphins, *injapana*, and two conch-shells. The cross-hatched object on the left of this panel is a trepang. Above this group at *d* is an attempt to depict a water-[132] spout, *bojunga*. These are not uncommon in the Gulf of Carpentaria during the monsoon season. On the upper right at *e* are two fish, and two turtles eating sea-urchins. The groups of curving lines indicate rough water.

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[40] Engraved pipe, Fig. 90D.

[41] See bark painting of *Borolo-borolo*, Pl. 110A.

* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XVIII.

[42] This symbol is often used in the art of north-eastern Arnhem Land, e.g. Pl. 115C.

[43] These symbols are used on carved figure of the shark, *mana*, Pl. 132A, B, C.

[44] The *mata* design of the *dua djapu*, language group, of Blue Mud Bay, Fig. 64A.

[45] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

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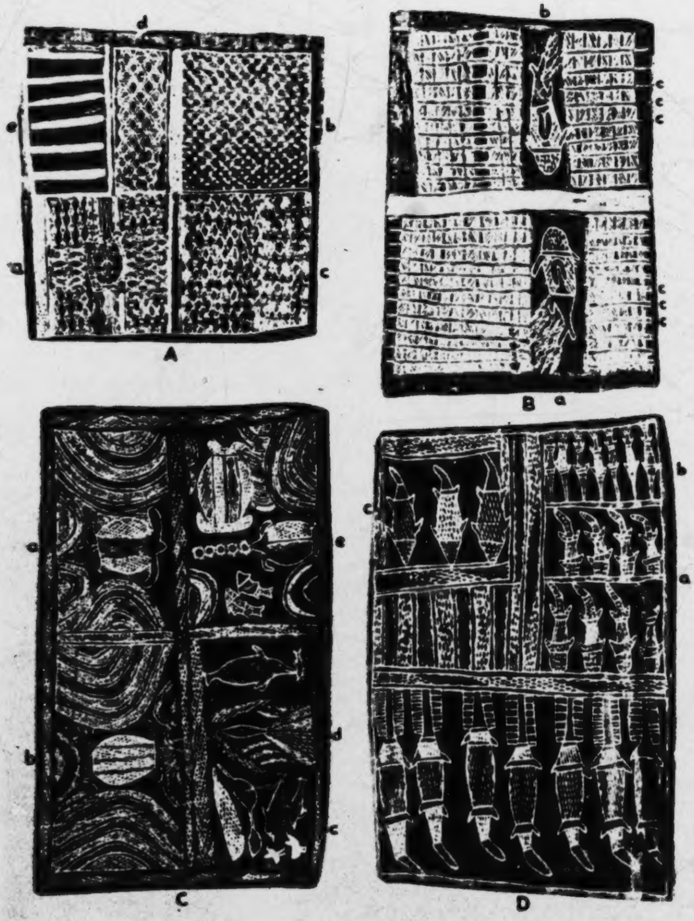
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Plate 119. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The fresh-water tortoise, mimala B The shark, mana C Turtles and fish D Salt-water fish

Salt-water Fish

*773 825 *532 Plate 119D depicts a number of salt-water fish.[46] On the bottom is a row of seven saw-fish, *baraka* (*Pristis* sp.). On the right-hand side at *a* are two rows of four sharks, *djerun-berunaui*; above them at *b*, seven gar-fish, *ma-aua* (*Tylosurus* sp); and opposite, at *c*, three shovel-nosed rays, *bandrung* (*Rhynchobatus* sp.). The cross-hatched areas represent the sea.

(6) INSECTS

The Stingless Honey Bee, Koko

During creation times there were two *dua* groups of the wild bees, *koko* (*Trigona carbonaria aughophorie*), the male ancestor being *jarapang* and the female, *lirawar*. These male and female bee ancestors lived in a hollow tree near the edge of a large swamp at Macuti on the Koolatong River.[47]

[262] Plate 120C represents two hives, the male wild honey, *jarapang*, on the right and the female honey, *lirawar*, on the left. The significance of the divisions are the same in both hives. The dome at the top represents the bee bread (young bees and pupae); *f*, more bee bread; while panels *b* and *d* are honey and *a*, *c* and *e* beeswax. All these parts of the hive are edible. The aborigines distinguish clearly between the flavour of *jarapang* and *lirawar* honey.

[237] Plate 120A is a representation of a group of hives of the honey bee. The black transverse lines *a*, *a*, picture the limbs of the tree in which the hive is built. The dots in the panel *b* are the bees, the cross-hatched central section, *c*, the honey and the honey-comb. Hard wax, much sought after for mounting spears and other implements, is indicated by the dotted transverse band *d*; the dotted panel *e* pictures the rubbish, dead bees and excreta from the hive. Tree roots are indicated by the lower cross-hatched band, *f*. Both the male hive, *jarapang*, and the female hive, *lirawar*, are in this group. Reading from the right, one, two and five are *jarapang*, three and four *lirawar* hives.

(7) TOPOGRAPHY

The Sea and the Sky

*532 This bark painting depicts a wet-season seascape. It makes an interesting comparison with a painting of a similar subject by a European artist. Although the aboriginal pictured the sky in the same manner as a white man, that is, in side elevation, he has painted the sea in plan, so that he can show the creatures on the sea-floor.[48]

In the upper panel of Pl. 120B are three thunderstorms drifting across the sky. The black bases of the two on the right indicate that they have not yet discharged their rain. The cross-hatching on the upper edge, however, indicates rain. On the left is a thunderstorm which has almost expended itself, although the rain is still falling. The clear space between the storms is the blue sky. The

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[46] Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.

[47] Map, Fig. 57.

[48] This characteristic is not unusual in the art of the more advanced people, e.g. Pl. 26C.

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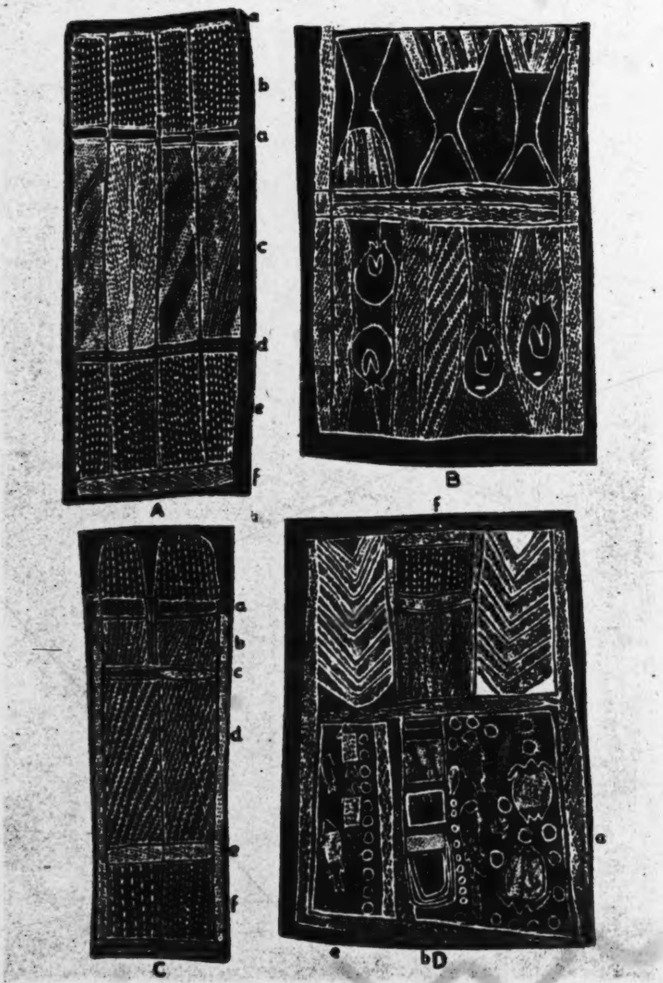
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PLATE 120. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, C Honey-bees, Koolatong River B The sea and the sky
D Topography, Trial Bay

532 lower section is the open sea, as viewed from above. The dark cross-hatched areas indicate the sandy sea bottom, and the light-coloured areas the sea. The creatures are stingrays, the crescent-shaped marks on their bodies being masses of fat which [262] the aborigines value as food.

Trial Bay

Plate 120D pictures the surroundings at a *dua* totemic spot near Trial Bay. 778 At *a* on the lower right-hand panel are two green turtles, *gariwa*, and the sea- *532 urchins (circles), on which they feed. The top turtle has a black seagull resting on its back and the one below, a white bird.[49] The next panel, *b*, shows rocks, Marin, which project above the water at Trial Bay. The vertical cross-hatched band to the left represents the waves beating against the rocks, and the black panel, *f*, another totemic rock, Nangi, the panels of chevron designs on either side of *f* symbolizing the rays of the sun. In the extreme left panel *e* are bone fish, *warawanda*, and a row of sea-urchins.

The Milungwira Swamps and the Men, Laitjun and Bourngauwili

*773 The Milungwira swamp, situated north of Blue Mud Bay at the mouth of *532 the River Girituwi, is an important totemic place in the *jiritja* mythology. It is 825 associated with the mythical man *Laitjun*,[50] another man, *Bourngauwili*, a dingo, *dulairuju*, a water-snake, *gamarana*, and a rat, *nik-nik*.[51]

Four bark paintings are associated with Milungwira and its totemic inhabitants.

Plate 121B pictures the Milungwira swamp and the man, *Bourngauwili*, who with his dog, *dulairuju*, had set out to hunt the rat, *nik-nik*, and yellow water-snake, *gamarana*. In the lower left panel *a* is the dog, *dulairuju*, and in the upper right panel *c* the rat, *nik-nik*, swimming through a swamp covered with the leaves of water-lilies, *jouku*. The meandering lines behind *nik-nik* indicate where it has pushed the lily leaves aside. The upper left and lower right-hand panels *b* and *d* [262] illustrate those parts of the swamp which are covered with water-lily leaves. The bulbs of the lilies are an important aboriginal food. The eight small circles, *e*, *e*, on the outer edge of the design are subsidiary swamps, Mailuju, where small bamboos, used by the aborigines for spear shafts, grow in abundance. The circle in the centre of the painting is the dry-season home of the yellow water-snake, *gamarana*, which no aboriginal will go near. During the wet season these snakes [821] leave their waterhole, go into the sky and create the rain, the thunderstorms and the lightning.[52] The four birds are herons, *balir*; the tracks on the right-hand

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* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXII.

[49] It is not an unusual sight in the Gulf of Carpentaria to see a bird resting on the back of a basking turtle. The resting bird indicates to the aborigines that the turtle is on the surface.

[50] See myth of *Banaitja* and *Laitjun*, p. 279.

[51] *Nik-nik* was the 'dog' of the woman, *Malwulwi*. See carved figure, Pl. 133D, and myth, p. 131.

[52] This appears to be a parallel myth to that of the *bilumbira* of Cape Arnhem, p. 351.

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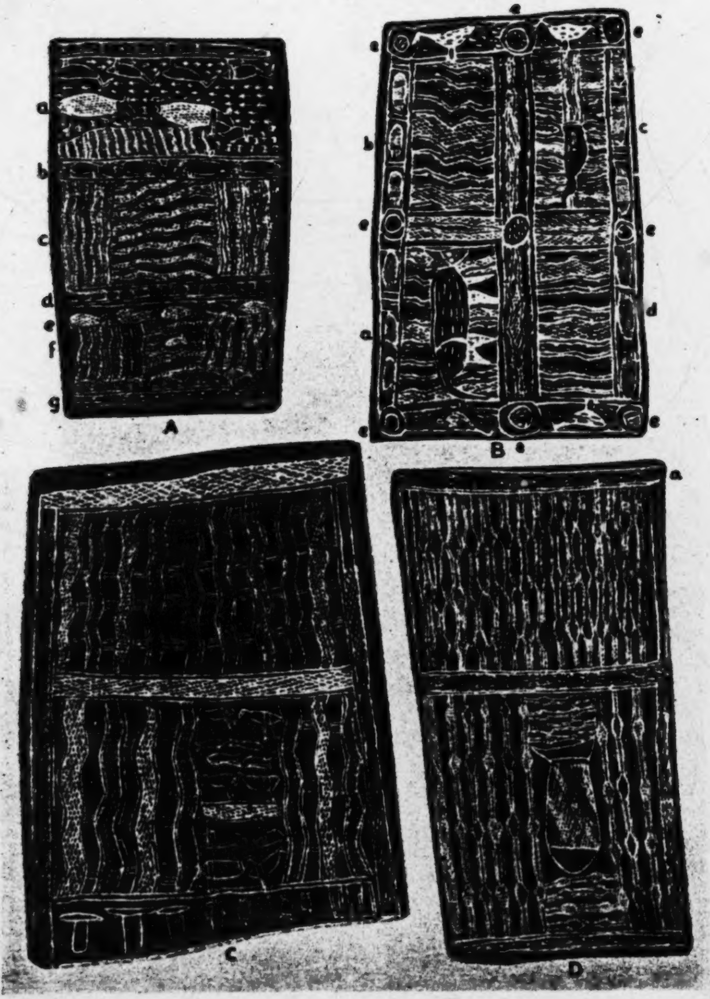
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PLATE 121. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, B The dog, dulairuju, and the rat, nik-nik C, D The swamp, Milungwira

*773 edge, those made by the mythical man as he walked to Milungwira, and those *532 on the left, where he returned.

825 Plate 121A refers to the dog, *dulairuju*, and his pursuit of the rat, *nik-nik*, in the Milungwira swamp. On the top edge of the painting is a line of dog tracks. Below them are four white herons surrounded by their footprints. At *a* is a male and female dog, each holding a rat, *nik-nik*, in its mouth; the male dog, *dulairuju*, is on the left. Below is a transverse panel, *b*, of dingoes and their tracks. The central panel, *c*, is swamp grass, the home of *nik-nik*. At *d* is a panel of dingo tracks, and at *e* another panel of five dingoes. In the middle of panel *f* the rat, *nik-nik*, is hiding from the dog in the middle of a thicket of swamp grass; *g* is a line of five white herons, *balir*, and their tracks.

On Pl. 121C the bulk of the painting consists of sinuous bands (running water), joined by straight lines (ripples on the surface of the water). The rectangle in the middle of the lower panel is the swamp, Milungwira. In its upper section four cormorants (*Phalacrocorax* sp.) are chasing four fish, called *bilda*. In the panel below are more cormorants. The transverse bands indicate subsidiary swamps at Milungwira. Reading from the left, the figures on the bottom panel are: three clouds, *balda*, the mythical man, *Laitjun*, four frogs, and five logs lying in the water of the swamp.[53]

Plate 121D is another bark painting associated with the topography of Milungwira. The top cross-hatched band, *a*, is the bed of the river, Girituwi, in which there are many waterfalls and rapids. The fish-shaped design in the lower panel is a totemic rock, called Tikorora, whose bottom, according to the myth, is in the mud and whose top is in the clouds. The four short transverse lines of *532 lozenge-shaped designs above and below Tikorora indicate whirlpools which 825 form at its base during heavy rains.

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The Island, Garabi

Garabi is a string of small islands outside Caledon Bay, all belonging to the [423] *jiritja* moiety. In creation times, when the creatures were men, the islands were [616] the home of the hump-backed whale, *morokundja*, the stingray, *barindjinou*, the queen fish, *tinimbu*, the crocodile, *barou*, and the hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*. Later these mythical beings transformed themselves into creatures which still frequent Garabi and their bodies into natural features in the adjacent country. The whales are two rugged islands, part of the Garabi chain. They also went [821] into the sky and became a section of the Milky Way,[54] near the constellation of Orion.

During those early times the crocodile man, *Barou*, murdered one of the stingray people. When the head man of the stingrays heard of the murder, he met and fought the crocodile, finally wounding him with the spear he now carries in his tail. This fight made everything square and established the first *makaraka*,

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[53] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

[54] See astronomical myth of Orion and the Pleiades, p. [illegible].

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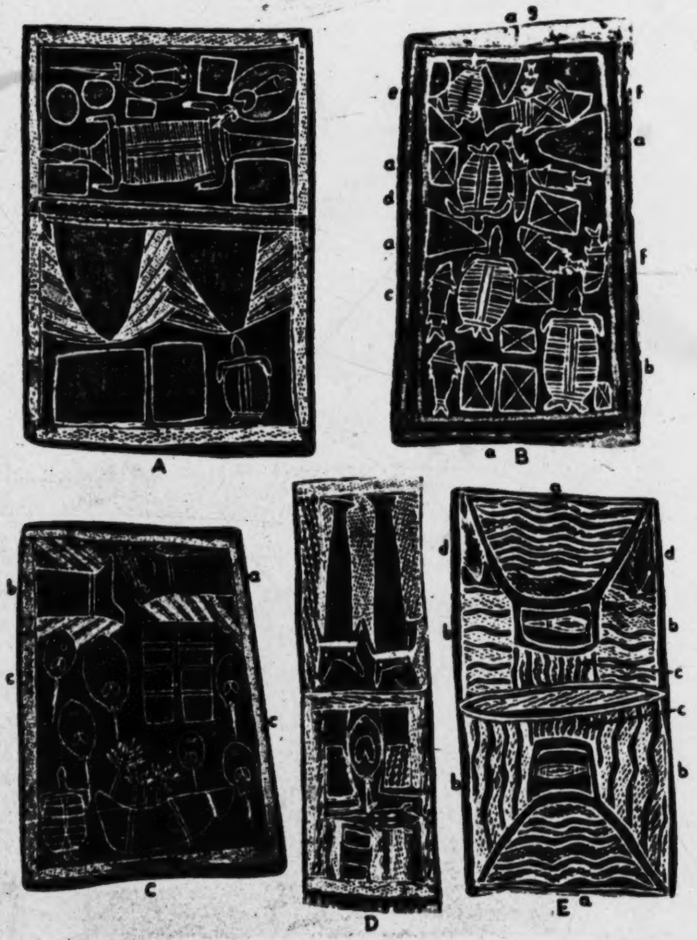
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PLATE 122. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla
The Garabi Islands

*773 *532 823 825 or ceremonial peacemaking fight, a custom which has been carried on by the aborigines ever since.[55]

The aborigines made five bark paintings of Garabi and its creatures.

Plate 122A pictures Wakwala, one of the islands of the Garabi group. The two rectangles in the lower panel are the totemic places of the hawksbill turtle and the crocodile. The cone-like figures above are thunder-clouds, with rain falling from them. A hawksbill turtle is on the lower right. In the upper panel is the crocodile and several stingrays. Around them are squares and circles which indicate where the stingrays once buried themselves in the sand.[56] These are now rocks on the sea coast. On the upper right the stingray is attacking the crocodile with his spear to avenge the death of a relative.

Plate 122B illustrates the Garabi Islands and the sea-creatures which live in the surrounding waters.[57] The islands and the large rocks of the Garabi Islands are indicated by *a*, *a*, *a*, and similar designs. There are four hawksbill turtles at *b*, *c*, *d* and *e*, rock cod at *f*, *f*, and a small fish, *joubauk*, at g. On the left-hand side of the turtle at *c* are two queen fish.

[262] Plate 122C is another representation of Garabi. At the bottom of the painting is one of the islands of the Garabi group with five unidentified palm trees growing from it. The aborigines eat the young shoots of these trees, which they call *bulmarik*. At *a* and *b*, on the top edge of the painting, are two thunder-clouds with rain falling from them (cross-hatched panels). A hawksbill turtle (lower left) lays its eggs in the sandy beaches of the island and gathers its food from among the coral rocks (four rectangles right of centre). The rain falling from the clouds, at *a*, *b*, has stimulated the six stingrays, *c*, *c*, to go to the mangrove swamps and produce their young.[58]

The upper panel of Pl. 122D pictures two of the hump-backed whales. Later they went into the sky and their bodies became islands at Garabi. In the lower panel is the stingray spearing the crocodile. The cross-hatched panels on either side of the stingray, and the black rectangles below the crocodile, are holes made by the stingray when, during mythical times, it buried itself in the sand. Those holes have since been transformed into boulders projecting from the sea.

Plate 122E is a descriptive painting of a place at Garabi where swollen streams muddy with the wet-season rains pour into the ocean and mix with the clear sea-water. The semi-circles, *a*, *a*, represent the muddy flood-waters diffusing into the sea; the meandering lines, *c*, *c*, at the bottom of squares depict a mixture of muddy and clear waters, and those at *b*, *b*, *b*, *b*, the uncontaminated sea-water. In squares at the bases of semicircles *a*, *a*, are mangrove seeds which have taken root in the mud, and at *e*, *e*, two bone fish, *jungulu*. The long ellipse symbolizes a mangrove tree, *bandumu*, growing in the mouth of the stream.

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[55] Warner (1937), p. 174, gives a detailed description of the *makarata*.
[56] When stingrays are alarmed they bury themselves in the sand to escape notice.
[57] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.
[58] See myth of stingrays on painted paddle, Pl. 102E, F, p. 240.

Cato River

532 *

Plate 123A pictures the surroundings on the Cato River.[59] The dark triangle in the lower part of the painting is a swamp into which flows the Cato River, the upper meandering cross-hatched band. In the upper end of the waterhole are two tortoises, *maralait*, copulating, and below, a fish, *kailaki*. On the lower right is a mythical snake; on each side of his head, and to the right of his tail, are palm trees, *guiveti* (probably *Livistona humilis*). The chevron pattern to the left of his tail symbolizes the water running from the body of the serpent[60] as it emerges from the waterhole. Other palm trees are shown at *b*, *b*, *b*, while the diagonal lines on *c*, *c*, are the tributaries pouring their water into the Cato River. Water-goannas are depicted at *d*, *d*, *d*, the dots surrounding them being the bubbles rising to the surface as they gather their food from the bottom. The dots on the trunks of the palms symbolize bees searching the palm tree flowers for honey.

A Sea Scene

Plate 123B deals with a number of sea-creatures on the shore.[61] In the top right-hand panel, *a*, the artist has drawn four *dua* green turtles, many sea-urchins, the food of the turtles, two sea-snakes, and in the top left, *c*, three young turtles and more sea-urchins. Immediately below them, at *d*, are three more turtles, called *buruku*. There was no explanation for the upturned canoe within the rectangle *e*. On the opposite side three mullet, *warawaru*, and three logs of wood occupy panel *b*.

Fresh-water Swamps near Yirrkalla

Plate 123C is the picture of an unidentified fresh-water swamp near Yirrkalla. Panel *a* depicts water-lily bulbs,[62] with three of them sprouting. The fresh-water fish occupy the centre of panel *b*. The anvil-like projections on each side of the fish are cumulus clouds. In the narrow transverse panel, *c*, a woman is collecting lily roots. At her feet is a dog, and to the right of her head, three fresh-water fish, their native names being *paipinga*, *magpuna* and *bilda* respectively. Panel *d* is a swamp and on its upper edge two cormorants, *gormala*, are searching for fish. The muddy areas of the swamp are cross-hatched, and the clear water is represented by parallel lines. In *e* is a stand of *rulkan* trees, which grow along the banks of fresh-water streams. The dotted areas between the five right-hand trees indicate fallen fruit. High up on the outer branch of the left-hand tree is a Torres Strait pigeon, *marlul* (*Myristicivora spilorrhoa*). The rectangle on the extreme left depicts the nest of the pigeon, with a young bird in the upper right-hand corner. The rectangle with the diagonal lines is a spider web.

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[59] Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.
[60] This resembles the *mata* design of the *ngrimil* language group, Fig. 63E.
[61] Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.
[62] Probably the bulbs of the water-lily (*Nymphaea gigantea*), which provide a plentiful aboriginal food supply for many months of the year.

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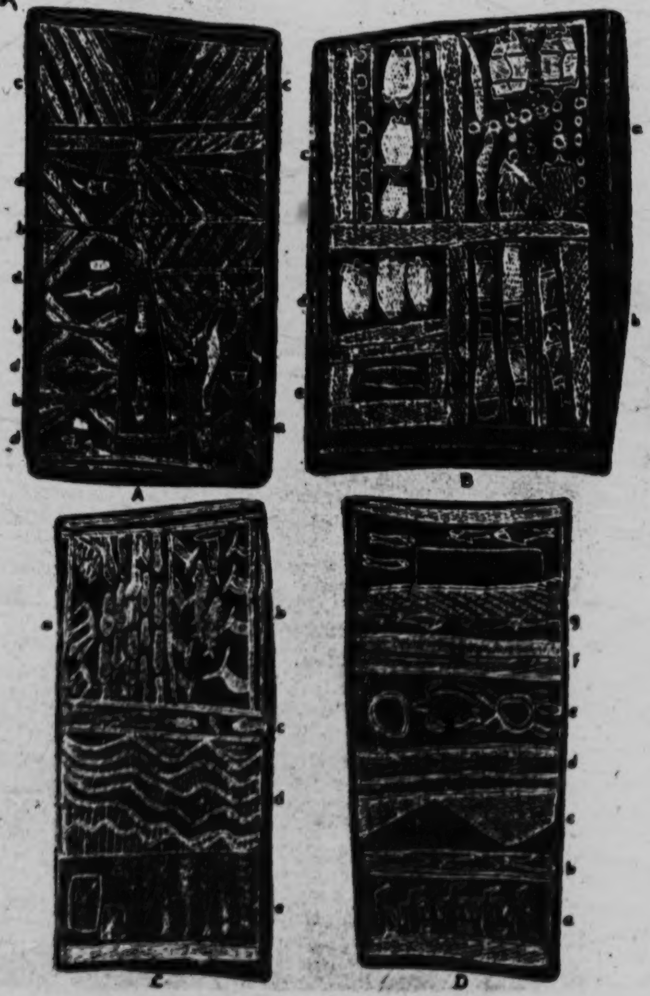
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PLATE 123. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The Cato River B A sea scene C Swamps, Yirrkalla D A sea beach

A Sea Beach

This painting, Pl. 123D, refers to the sea beach and the *dua* creatures which live on it.[63] In the first panel, *a*, are five unidentified sea birds (aboriginal name *waltungu*) and above them, at *b*, is a line of thin, flat fish, called *makini*. The next panel, *c*, shows the water running up on the beach, the plain areas being the sand and the cross-hatched areas the water. Above this, at *d*, is a line of five octopi, *gunderiera*. Occupying the central position in the next panel, *e*, is a green turtle, *gariwa*, and on each side of its hind flippers are two octopi, *mainda*. On the left-hand side of the same panel are six lobsters which live in the pools of the coral reefs (light-coloured circles with black centres), and on the right-hand, three more lobsters and another coral pool. Panel *f* encloses a bamboo, right, and a log of wood, left, both of which have floated up on the tide. At *g* are four *makini* fish swimming in the sea, indicated by cross-hatching. The symbols in the top panel, *h*, were not identified. 532*

Bartalumba Point and the Fish-man, Boriota

A mythical fish-man, *Boriota*, came from the Rose River area to Bartalumba Point, on Groote Eylandt (map, Fig. 4), where he created many watercourses, cliffs and rainstorms. 773* 532*

On Pl. 124A the three dark-coloured triangles in panel *a* are spire-like rocks on the cliffs at Bartalumba Point. The background of this panel symbolizes rain clouds. In panel *b* the central dark rectangle is a watercourse at Bartalumba created by *Boriota* and the panels on either side, falling rain. The dotted panels on the right and left-hand edge of *b* represent stratus clouds. The four dark coloured panels in panel *c* are crevices in the cliffs at Bartalumba, the dotted background, more rain clouds.

A Mangrove Swamp

Plate 124C depicts a mangrove swamp. At the upper edge, *a*, are five thunder clouds, from which the rain is falling (parallel lines in panel *b*). In the third panel, *c*, are the tracks of the cormorants, *goumala*, in the mud of the mangrove swamp. Six cormorants are catching mullet, *gunbirawi*, in panel *e*, and at *d* four of them are flying to their nests.[64]

Port Bradshaw

Plate 124B represents a river running into Port Bradshaw. At the left is a woman standing on a rock (the rectangle) in the water. Opposite to her (upside down) is her husband, *Wirili*.[65] The central design is a crocodile, *barru*, and at the lower right-hand, *a*, is a large bone-fish, *jungala*. At the tail of the crocodile, in the same panel as the bone-fish, and on the left-hand side of the woman, are seven rock cod, *kouper*.

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[63] Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.

[64] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

[65] *Wirili* was associated with yellow ochre at Garunga, Pl. 110A, and the bush fire at the Gainmaul River, Pl. 95B.

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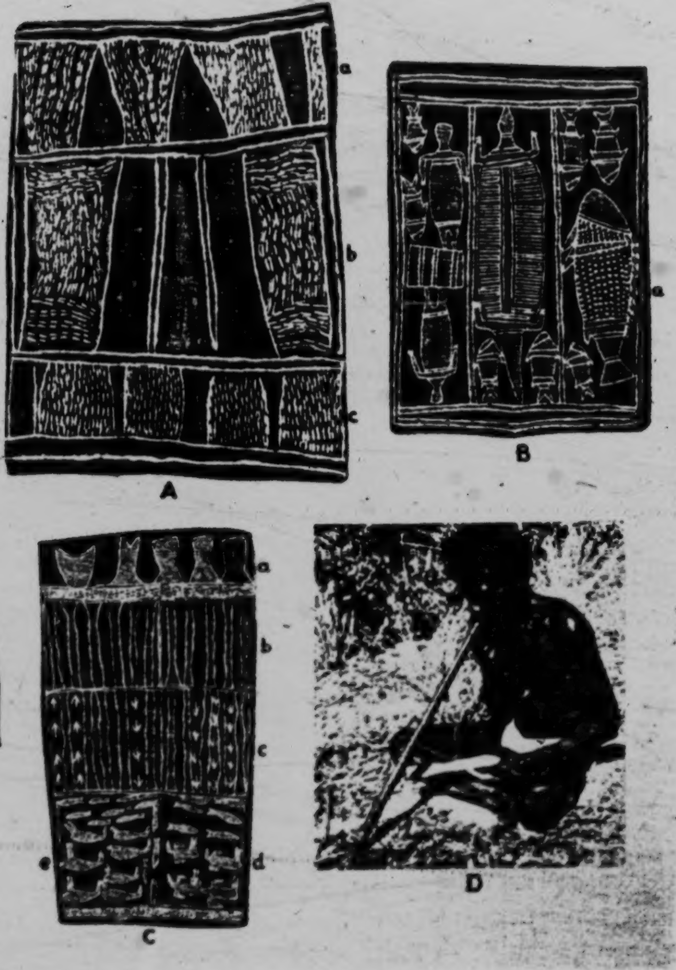

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PLATE 124. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The man, Borinta, at Bartalumba B Port Bradshaw C A mangrove swamp
D An aboriginal smoking a Malay pipe

(8) The Art of Milingimbi

The Rev. Arthur F. Ellemor made a small collection of Milingimbi bark 532* paintings for the expedition, together with simple but incomplete interpretations. 104 This collection was valuable because it shows that the art of Milingimbi, on the [114] west of north-eastern Arnhem Land, and that of Yirrkalla on the east, are similar both in design and mythological content.

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The Wild Honey, Koko

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The honey of the stingless bee is one of the few sweet foods in the aborigines' 222 menu. Many hours are spent searching for this food and a great deal of labour [262 expended climbing the trees and cutting out the hives. Four bark paintings[66] 481] were collected dealing with the mythical wild-honey ancestors of Milingimbi.

Plate 125C is associated with a mythical wild-honey woman, called *Birikura*, whose camp was on the mainland south of Elcho Island. This site is a totemic place of the wild honey, *koko*. The painting is a conventionalized representation of a hive of wild bees, the projection from the upper edge being the 'nose' or entrance to the hive, and the central disc, the beeswax. The cross-hatched diamond-shaped patterns covering the bulk of the painting represent the honey comb, the white lines forming the margins of the various cells, the beeswax, and the dotted diamonds the eggs and young bees in the nursery cells.

Plate 125A is another painting of a hive of wild honey. The symbolism is similar to that in C, except that the artist has shown four entrances to the hive.

Plate 125D pictures *koko's* totemic place at Murnaramdul, near Arnhem Bay. The three transverse panels, *a*, *a*, *a*, and the vertical cross-hatched one, *b*, refer to logs lying on the ground near Murnaramdul, in which there are hives of wild bees. Within the design made by these four logs are hives of wild bees. These hives are pictured with the same symbols as those in A and C, the two long triangular projections at the top of the painting being entrances to the hive.

Plate 125B is another painting of a hive of wild bees, using the traditional symbolism to show the wax, honey, eggs and young bees. The long rectangular design in the middle of the bark painting is a hollow tree in which there is a hive of bees, the honey and comb. The hive is again shown at the bottom of the central panel. The entrance or nose of the hive is a long tapering design at the top. The side panels illustrate two more hives.

Mimala, the Fresh-water Tortoise

Plate 126A pictures a forest area near Arnhem Bay, called Jaraga, the totem 532* place of the mythical fresh-water tortoise, *mimala*.[67] Three of these tortoises are [778] shown at the top of the painting, the designs on each carapace representing the water-grass often growing on the backs of these creatures. The three dark-coloured vertical lines, *a*, *a*, *a*, are logs and the four panels of diamond-shaped

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[66] These designs are similar to those of the *dalwongu mats*, Fig. 61J.

[67] *Mimala*, the fresh-water tortoise, is also pictured on an engraved smoking pipe, Fig. 89D; on a painted coffin, Pl. 105B; and on another bark painting, Pl. 110A.

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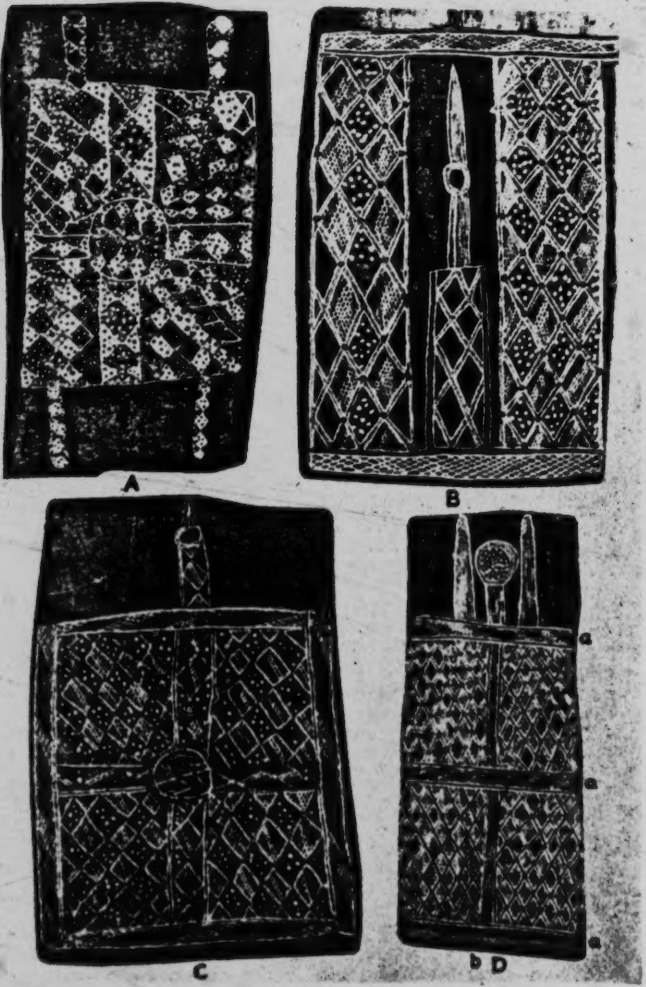

PLATE 125. Bark paintings, Milingimbi

Hives of honey, Milingimbi

patterns, the comb of a hive of wild bees, associated in some undefined way with 532*
the tortoises.

Fish and Eggs

Plate 126B refers to the spawn and developing young of an unidentified fish which lives in the swamps south of Milingimbi. The dotted lines symbolize the developing fish, and the sloping lines between, the spawn.

The Kangaroo-man, Gardjambal

Plate 126C belongs to Nulwadjbir, situated on the southern end of Bucking- 773*
ham Bay, the totemic place of the kangaroo-man, *Gardjambal*, who is shown 532*
seven times in this painting. The design at the bottom of the right-hand panel [778
is the stone axe of the kangaroo-man; the remaining ovals are his tracks. 823]

The Serpent-men, Jurlungur and Gadjalan

Plate 126D pictures the two serpent-men, *Jurlungur* (upside down) and *Gadjalan*, creators of the country of Mirrirmina.[68] Each mythical man is wearing a tall feather head-dress. To the right of both *Jurlungur* and *Gadjalan* are their spear-throwers, spears and wooden trumpets.

The Two Sisters, Miwal and Wanu-wanu

Plate 127A pictures two mythical women, *Miwal* and *Wanu-wanu*,[69] in their bark hut at Djimba, a place in a jungle near the Gardji swamp. This swamp is on the mainland south of Milingimbi. The long panel in the middle of the bark painting is the central pole supporting the bark hut. Within this pole there is a hive of wild bees, the dots representing the bees and the honeycomb. The two women, *Miwal* and *Wanu-wanu*, with their hands upraised, are at the top of the painting. The remaining designs were not explained.

Unidentified Totem, Galdar

Plate 127B pictures a totemic place, Budjala, in eastern Arnhem Bay, which [823
belongs to an unidentified totemic creature, called *galdar*. At some time during 778]
the creation period *galdar* struck a rock at Budjala, causing so much water to flow that it overwhelmed two men who were guarding some sacred objects. The ancestral people swam to an island, where they rested until the flood had subsided.

The four lines of lozenges, *a, a*, represent the running water, and the three transverse panels, *b, b, b*, the sand-banks in the stream. The four rectangles with the projections at each end are the sacred objects. There was no explanation for the fish.

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[68] It was the serpent, *jurlungur*, which swallowed one of the Wawalik sisters at the
Mirrirmina waterhole, see myth, p. 275, and Warner (1937), p. 250. Warner places this waterhole [133]
on the Glyde River. The Rev. Ellemor's informants say that Mirrirmina is an extensive swamp between the Woolen and Buckingham Rivers. Both Warner and Ellemor, however, place the waterhole in the same clan area, Liaalaomir.

[69] The Rev. Ellemor considers these two women are similar to the *Wawalik* sisters. See Warner (1937), p. 250 and myth, p. 278.

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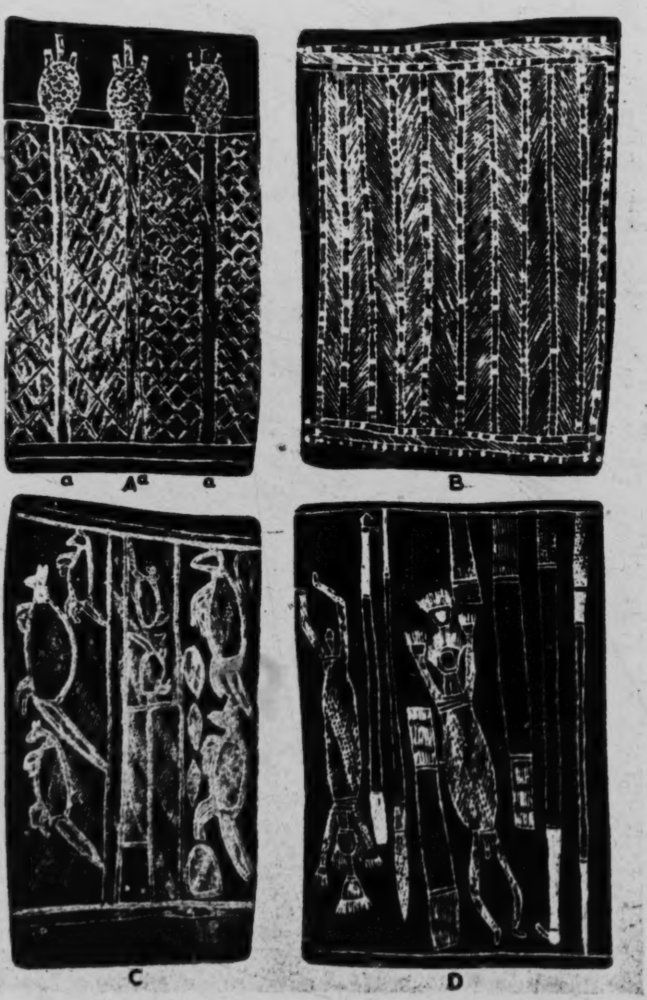

PLATE 126. Bark paintings, Milingimbi

A The tortoise, mimala B Fish and eggs C The kangaroo-man, Gardjambal
D The serpent-men, Jurlungur and Gadjalan

The Saw-fish, Nalgan

Plate 127C belongs to the saw-fish, *nalgan*, totem of Milingimbi. Four saw-fish 532 are depicted, two in the upper panel at *a*, *a*, and two in the lower at *b*, *b*. In the 778 lower panel a fresh-water tortoise is shown between the tails of the saw-fish. 823 Scattered throughout the drawing are small star-like designs which represent the star-fish, *midjala*. These fish provide food for the tortoises. The oval designs between the star-fish represent seaweed, *djiwul*, and the dots, its fruit. The two fish on the right side of the upper panel are called by the native name of *wungulbu*, and the three transverse cross-hatched panels, *c*, *c*, *c*, are sand-bars near the totemic place. There are three flying fish, *digar*, at the upper edge of the bark painting.

The Turtle, Wilira

The totemic place of the turtle, *wilira*, pictured in Pl. 127D, is an island called Nulgunin-nuna, situated north-west of Elcho Island. The triangular patterns occupying most of the surface of the bark painting are clouds created by the three turtles spraying water into the sky. Two king-fish are shown in the clouds, one at *a* and one at *b*.

2. SMOKING PIPES AND MYTHS

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As far as I am aware the long smoking pipe, Fig. 59A, B, is used in Australia 276 only by the aborigines of Arnhem Land and the adjacent islands. [171]

Tobacco smoking was introduced by the Malays within the last century or so when they visited Australia during their periodical journeys to collect trepang and pearl shell, though the *Baijini* myth suggests that the aborigines may have become acquainted with tobacco at an even earlier date. After the Common- [648] wealth Government, about 1910, prohibited the Malays from coming to Australia the aborigines continued to use the Malay pipe, smoking either a substitute or [439 European tobacco, occasionally issued by white traders and missionaries. 797]

In general, the pipes[70] are made in a few minutes from the pithy stem of a shrub (*Guettarda speciosa*). The aboriginal removes the pith with a thin stick; 276 plugs one end with bark, cuts a hole in the side an inch or more from the end, [824] fits a bowl[71] saved from the old pipe, and, except for the engraving, the pipe is complete.

The pipes I collected are about an inch in diameter and varied in length [171] from eight inches at Groote Eylandt to thirty inches at Yirrkalla, Fig. 59B. It was necessary to have a longer pipe stem at Yirrkalla so that there would be sufficient room for the totemic designs. In use, Pl. 124D, the aboriginal takes a

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[70] The bowls of the early pipes were made of tin-plate and carefully treasured. Since the [177] last war, most pipe bowls are made from shortened cartridge cases. As mentioned earlier, the aborigines recognize the difference between the *Baijini* pipes, which are similar to those used by Europeans, and those of the Malays. The *Baijini* were a mysterious group of fair-skinned people who once camped at Port Bradshaw, myth, p. 333.

[71] Warner (1937), p. 461, refers to the smoking pipes of the Murngin, near Milingimbi, and Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 102, to those at Yirrkalla.

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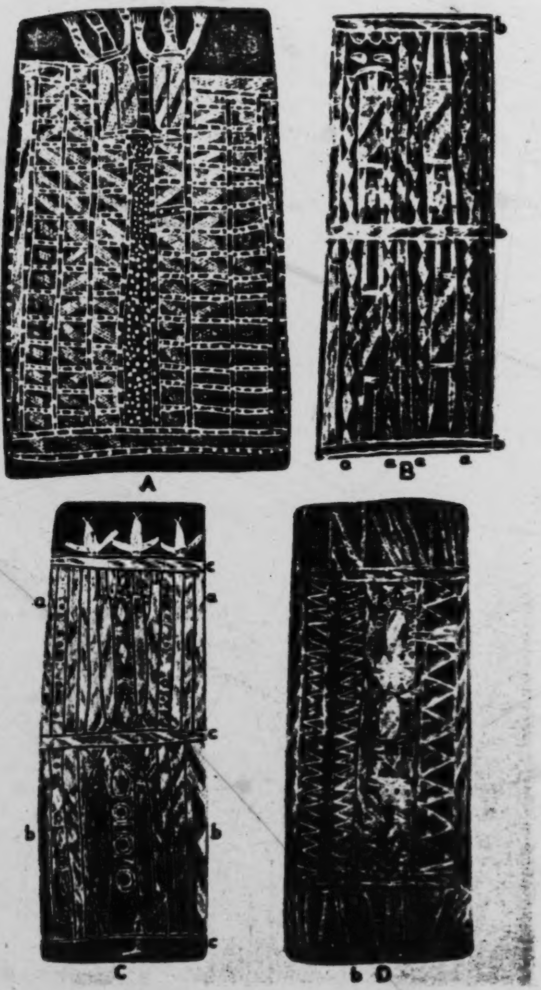
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PLATE 127. Bark paintings, Milingimbi

A The women, Miwal and Wanu-wanu B Unidentified totem, galdur
C The saw-fish, nalgan D The turtle, wilira

pinch of tobacco, presses it tightly into the bowl, and lights it either with a coal from the camp-fire, or a burning twig. He fills his mouth and lungs with tobacco smoke, then passes the pipe to a companion, who does likewise. This usually exhausts the supply of tobacco, but if there is any left the pipe is either passed to another aboriginal or back to the first man. 276

Most of the smoking pipes at both Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla are covered with engravings. Those at Groote Eylandt had herring-bone patterns which did not appear to have any specific meaning, but those at Yirrkalla and Milingimbi all bore complex designs, most of them illustrating totemic stories belonging to the sacred life of the men. Because of this, the owners kept the stems wrapped in paper-bark, Fig. 59A, so that the decorations could not be seen by the women when the pipes were used in the main camp. The bark painting of *Wanatpa*, Pl. 95B, shows him holding a Malay pipe in either hand. 276 532* [171]

As the engravings on the Yirrkalla pipes entailed considerable time and effort, the aborigines were not always willing to part with them. They allowed me, however, to make rubbings of the patterns. These are reproduced in the text figures.

The Crocodile, Baron

This pipe, Fig. 59C, is associated with a *jiritja* totem place of the crocodiles, *baron*, which is on the Kariatpa[72] swamp, Caledon Bay. [778 803]

The diamond-shaped designs in panel *c* of Fig. 59C are the swamps at Blue Mud Bay. The next panel shows the crocodiles, *b*, lying in the swamps at Kariatpa. Round the reptiles, the designs *a*, *a* represent swamp grass and crocodile eggs.[73] The two lines of lozenge-shaped designs at *d*, *d* are the Kariatpa swamps.

The Fresh-water Tortoise, Mimala

When the fresh-water tortoise, *Mimala*, and his wife were human beings they lived at Calabaibai, a totemic place on the banks of a fresh-water stream flowing into the sea south of Milingimbi.[74] One day the fresh-water tortoise made a carved human figure, *mimalatuna*, which he carried a long way inland and hid in a sacred place where no women could see it. Being tired after his journey, *Mimala* laid down and went to sleep. On waking up he found he was particularly warm and comfortable, for his body had sunk so deeply in the soft mud that he was almost covered. He saw, too, that the surrounding country was covered with swamp grass and rushes, interspersed with many streams of fresh water. *Mimala*, pleased with the warmth of the mud and the close proximity of so much grass and water, changed himself, and later his wife, into fresh-water tortoises. 773*

From that time the tortoise, *mimala*, has lived either in the fresh-water streams and swamps or the grass that grows near by.

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[72] Myth, p. 368.

[73] These are similar to the *mata* design of the *gumaitj* language group of Caledon Bay.

[74] See log coffin, Pl. 105B, and bark paintings, Pl. 119A, 128A.

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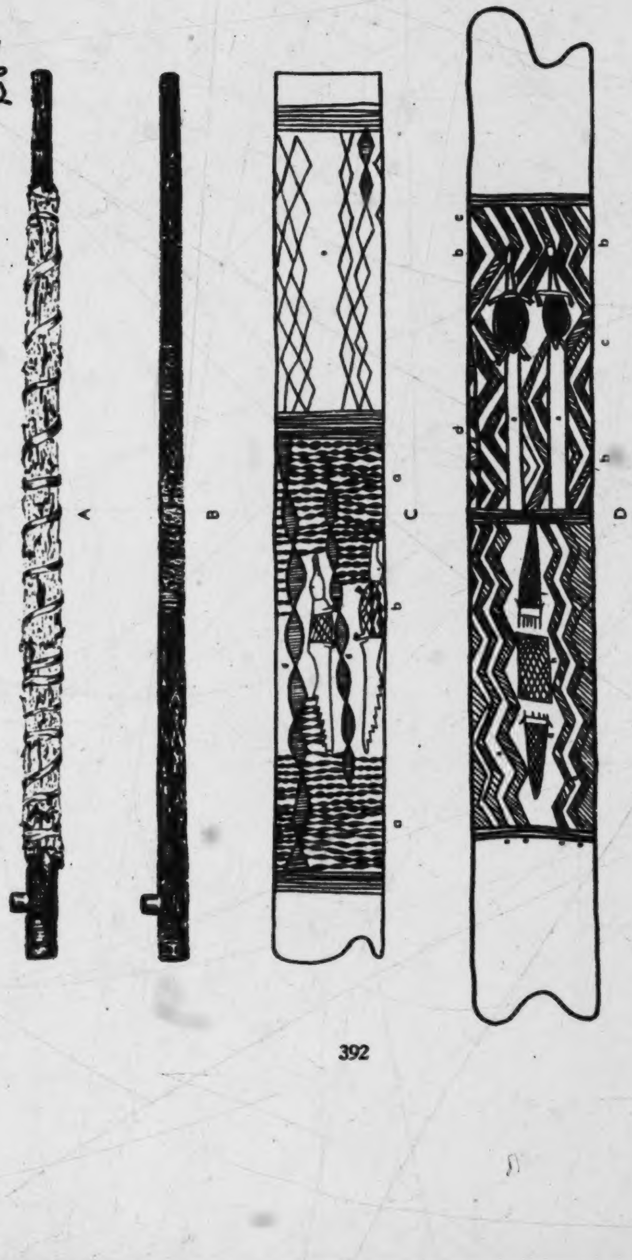

FIG. 59. Engraved smoking pipes, Yirrkalla

A, B Smoking pipes, wrapped and unwrapped C The crocodile, barou D The tortoise, mimala

The design, Fig. 59D, deals with the totemic place at Calataibi of the fresh-water tortoise, *mimala*. On the upper half of the pipe *Mimala* and his wife are resting on two sand-bars, *a, a*, in the stream. The shaded zigzag lines, *b, b*, represent the swamp grass and *c, c*, the plain spaces between, the running water. The heavy black line, *d*, indicates a tree which has fallen into the stream. On the left-hand, the upper and lower figures *f* and *g*, in the central panel, are two cat-fish, *mambira*, the fleshy tentacles from the mouth of the fish being diagrammatically represented. Between the fish at *h* is a fruit, *nalpu* (presumably that of a pandanus palm), which grows along the river bank. The shaded zigzag areas, *e, e*, on the left, indicate the swamp grass where the tortoise lays her eggs; *c, c*, are streams of running water. 773* 532* 276

Wild Honey, Koko. The Male Ancestor, Jarapang

The male ancestor, *Jarapang*, of *koko*, the wild honey totem, belongs to the *dua* moiety. His totem place is in a hollow tree at Macuti, on the Koolatong River.

The diamond-shaped figures, *a, a*, on Fig. 60A symbolize the honey in the comb and the dots, *b, b*, the pupae of the young bees. The torpedo-like figure, *c*, at the upper right, is the wild bee ancestor, *Jarapang*, resting in his hollow tree at Macuti, represented by the long rectangle, *d*.

Wild Honey, Koko. The Female Ancestress, Lirawar

The *dua* female wild honey ancestress, *Lirawar*, lived with her husband, *Jarapang*, in a hollow tree near the Macuti swamp on the Koolatong River.

Fig. 60B represents a hive of wild honey; the chevron designs, *c, c*, occupying most of the pipe stem, represent the honey in the cells. The transverse bands, *a, a*, indicate the bee bread and the pupae of young bees; the other transverse bands, *b, b*, the hard wax.[75]

The Thunder-man, Bolngo

Bolngo is a mythical thunder-man who lives at Wulwulwi, near the mouth of the Koolatong River. At the beginning of the wet season, *Bolngo* climbs to the top of a high paper-bark tree and urinates. When *Bolngo's* urine splashes on the ground it goes into the sky to form clouds. The rain from these clouds makes the water flow in the stream at Wulwulwi.[76]

On Fig. 60C, panel *a* represents the paper-bark tree on which *Bolngo* stands; *b* is *Bolngo* urinating; *c* is the urine splashing on the ground; and *d* is *Bolngo's* camp at Wulwulwi. The two parallel panels, *e, e*, represent the bed of the river, Wulwulwi; the sloping lines, the water pouring into the river from subsidiary

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[75] This wax is used extensively for mounting stone implements, repairing utensils and moulding animal figures.

[76] *Bolngo* is a parallel myth to that of *Tjambuwal* at Yirrkalla. See bark painting, Pl. 90B and 93B, also myth, p. 267.

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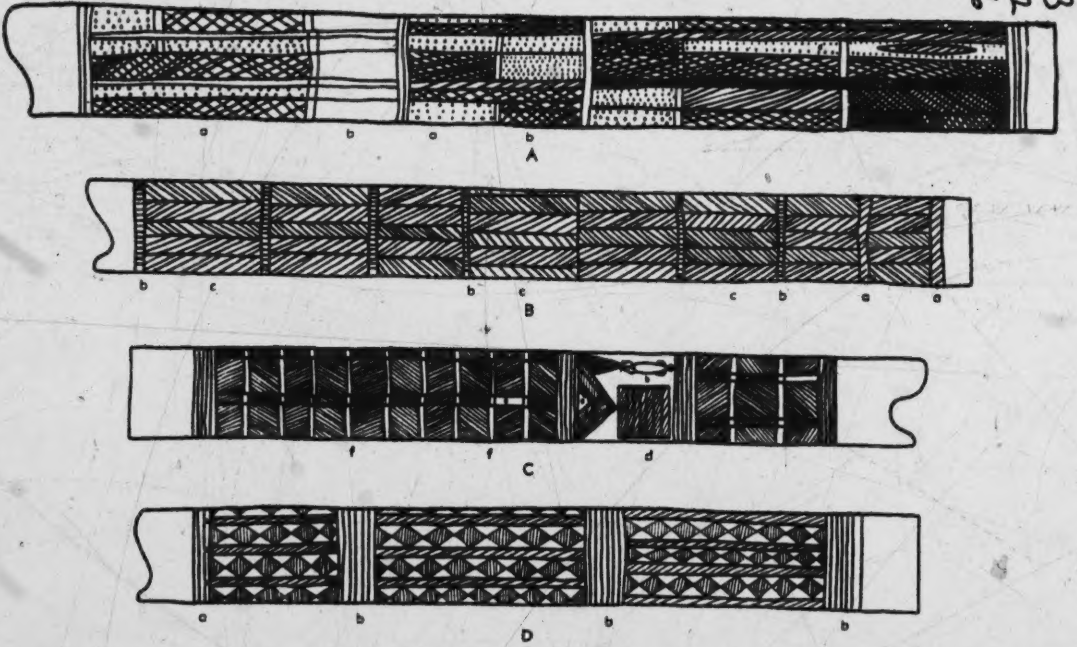
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Fig. 60. Engraved smoking pipes, Yirrkalla

A Male wild honey, Jarapang B Female wild honey, Lirawar C The Thunder-man, Bolngo D The man, Laitjun, and his fish-trap

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streams during the heavy rain; and the parallel lines, *f, f*, rocks and sand-bars in the bed of the river. 532* 276

The Man, Laitjun, and his Fish Trap

In the early days, a man called *Laitjun*[77] made a fish trap on the Koolatong River, in which to catch *paipinga*, a fresh-water fish. The aborigines still use the same kind of fish trap. 773* 276

Fig. 61 shows the present construction of the trap. Across the Koolatong River the aborigines constructed a weir by driving sticks into the bed of the river, leaving an opening in the centre. The space between the sticks was filled with branches, grass and earth, and across the opening an almost submerged paper-bark raft was anchored. When fish are needed the aborigines assemble at the trap and, by running about and beating the water downstream, drive the fish toward the opening. When they reach the partly submerged raft, the fish endeavour to jump over it, but become stranded on top, where they are caught.

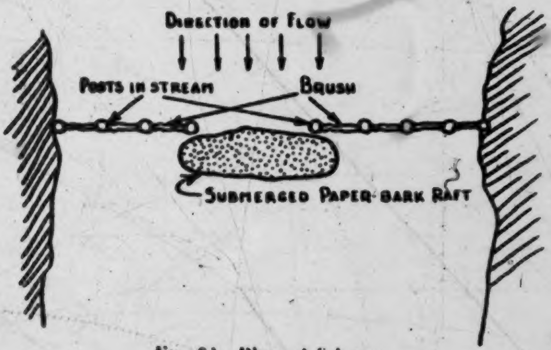

Fig. 61. Plan of fish-trap

On Fig. 60D the parallel lines, *a, a, a*, are the sticks driven into the bed of the stream and the diamond-shaped patterns the water running between them. The aborigines explained that they would have included the raft in the pipe engraving, but there was not sufficient room. The four groups of parallel lines, *b, b*, are trees fallen across the river.

The Fresh-water Goannas, Djerilka

The mythical fresh-water goannas, *djerilka*, lived in a totemic waterhole on the Cato River, near Melville Bay. 773*

The panel *a* in Fig. 62A is the totemic waterhole of the *djerilka*, the herring-bone design symbolizing the water. In panel *b* are the male and female goannas. The female on the top is leaving the waterhole in panel *a*, and the 532* 778 823

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[77] See myth of *Banaitja* and *Laitjun*, p. 279.

*773 *532 male, left, is entering it. The background design[78] represents the fallen leaves of an unidentified palm. The symbols in panel *c* represent the fallen leaves of the same tree. In panel *d* the male and female goannas are travelling in the one direction. The background is the same as elsewhere, fallen palm leaves.

The Man, Oijal

This myth has already been related in association with the relevant bark paintings of *Oijal* and his sister, *Neri-neri.*[79]

The designs on this pipe, Fig. 62B, belong to a large hill, Tjiruru, the totemic place where *Oijal* cooked his honey. The two groups of long parallel lines, *f, f*, in the left-hand panel symbolize the river, Wandaraui, which was created when the brother and sister felled a tall tree in their search for honey. The sloping lines, *b, b*, are the subsidiary streams that run into Wandaraui River, which, in turn, empties its waters into Melville Bay. The small gutters made in the surrounding plains by the wet-season floods are shown by the marks *c, c.* Lines *e* indicate the hill, Tjiruru, the totem place of *Oijal* and *Neri-neri.* In the right-hand panel, the groups of crescent-shaped lines, *a, a*, picture the boomerangs of *Oijal.* The transverse marks on the boomerangs are lines of paint.

The Fresh-water Goanna, Bije

The fresh-water goanna, *bije*, found yellow ochre near a stream at Gurunga, [317] a few miles south of Caledon Bay. Since then the men of the *jiritja* moiety have visited that place to collect their ochres.[80]

In panel *c*, Fig. 62C, the fresh-water goanna is lying among the rocks and water of his totemic place. The designs with the transverse bars in panels *a, c,* and *d* symbolize the fresh water running between reefs of yellow ochre (the blank spaces). The groups of parallel lines at *b* indicate where it is possible to ford the stream. Panel *d* shows where the stream, discovered by the water-goanna, enters the ground and disappears.

The Man, Ngulamung, Blue Mud Bay

The myth of this *jiritja* pipe centres round the mythical man *Ngulamung,* who frequented the swamps in the *malarapa* clan country, at Blue Mud Bay, to collect water-lily bulbs, *jouku.* As *Ngulamung* collected the bulbs, he put [252] them in a carrying-bag, took them to his camp and, raking back the embers, buried the bag, bulbs and all in the hot sand and ashes.[81] Two other totem creatures are included in the engraved design, the teredo worm, *kaula-warak,* and the fish, *bunumba.*

Fig. 62D is the complete design of the pipe. In panel *a* are two fresh-water fish, *bunumba,* the meandering lines originating at the tail of the upper fish

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[78] This is similar to the *mata* design of the *ngeimil* language group of Arnhem Bay, Fig. 61F.

[79] Myth, p. 292.

[80] See myth, p. 371, also bark painting, Pl. 110B.

[253 177] [81] The aborigines claim that this method of cooking water-lily bulbs was used in times past. It has been discarded in more recent years.

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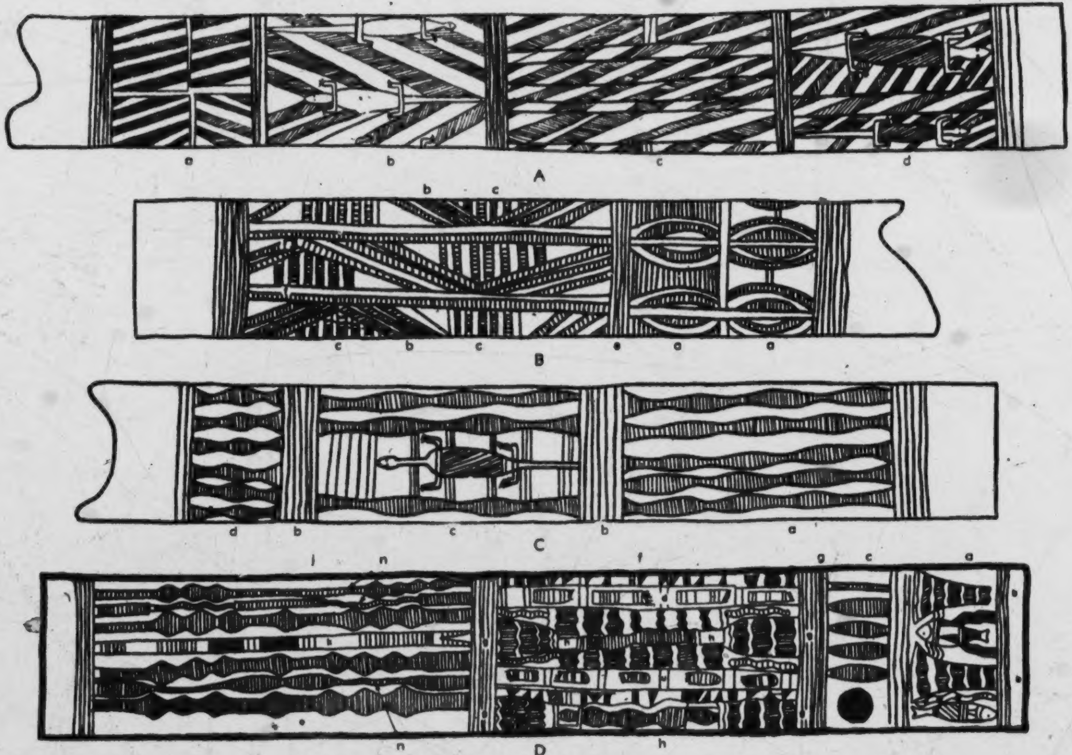
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Fig. 62. Engraved smoking pipes, Yirrkalla

A The fresh-water goannas, djerilka **B** The man, Oijal **C** The fresh-water goanna, bije. **D** The man, Ngulamung

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*532 symbolizing its wake. Designs *b*, *b* are two trees at the totemic place, the transformed bodies of the fish, *bunumbu*. The four ovals in panel *c* are masses of eggs belonging to the same fish: they are now sand-banks. In panel *f*, the line of footprints at *d* are those of *Ngulamung* as he walked to the swamps to collect lily bulbs, and at *e* those he made on his return journey. At *g*, *g* are the bags in which he cooked the bulbs, and *h*, *h*, the cooked bulbs.

In the lower panel, *j*, the lozenge-shaped figures are the bulbs of the lily, *jouku*, and *n*, their roots. The triangular patterns along the upper edge of panel *l* represent a sharp-edged grass growing in the swamp which cuts the legs of the aborigines; *k* is the toredo worm, *kaula-warak*, whose totemic place is also at Blue Mud Bay.

The Man, Wanamungaria, of Blue Mud Bay

[614] The complete design on this *jiritja* pipe refers to the fresh-water swamps, the sandy beach, the rocks near the shore, the open sea, and a mythical man, *Wanamungaria*, all belonging to the *malarapa* clan country of Blue Mud Bay. The pipe is divided into two sections, the symbols on panel *a* picturing the swamps, and on the other, *d*, the sea, its creatures and the canoe of the mythical man, *Wanamungaria*.

Panel *a* of Fig. 63A is a fresh-water swamp covered with water-lilies, *jouku* (unidentified). The designs, *c*, are the leaves, and *b* the bulbs. The parallel lines, *d*, indicate the beach which separates the swamp from the sea. The lower panel, *k*, pictures the coast and the open sea. At *e* is an engraving of the canoe of *Wanamungaria*, with the four paddles lying in the bottom. The canoe has since been transformed into a large rock, *j*, on the sea coast. The lines *f* represent the open sea, g a dugong, and *h* a queen fish.

The Wrecked Canoe at Port Bradshaw

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*532 In recent years, during a heavy storm, a large outrigger canoe, possibly from Papua, was cast up on the shore between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw.[82] The designs on the canoe inspired one of the *jiritja* men to engrave this pipe.

Fig. 63B was covered, for most of its length, with triangles resembling the cloud symbols used on the *jiritja* paintings of the Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw aborigines. Both these and the meandering designs at the end of the pipe are supposed to be a copy of those the artist saw on the canoe. This is the only example in my collection of Arnhem Land art about which the artist was unable to explain the meanings of the symbols he used.

The Yam, Trial Bay

*532 I did not gather any other details about the mythological story associated with this pipe, Fig. 63C, except that it belonged to the yam totem of Trial Bay.

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[82] The aborigines believe that these canoes are sent to them by the inhabitants of the *jiritja* 'heaven'. Nalkuma. Myth. p. 331.

[text continues on p. 400]

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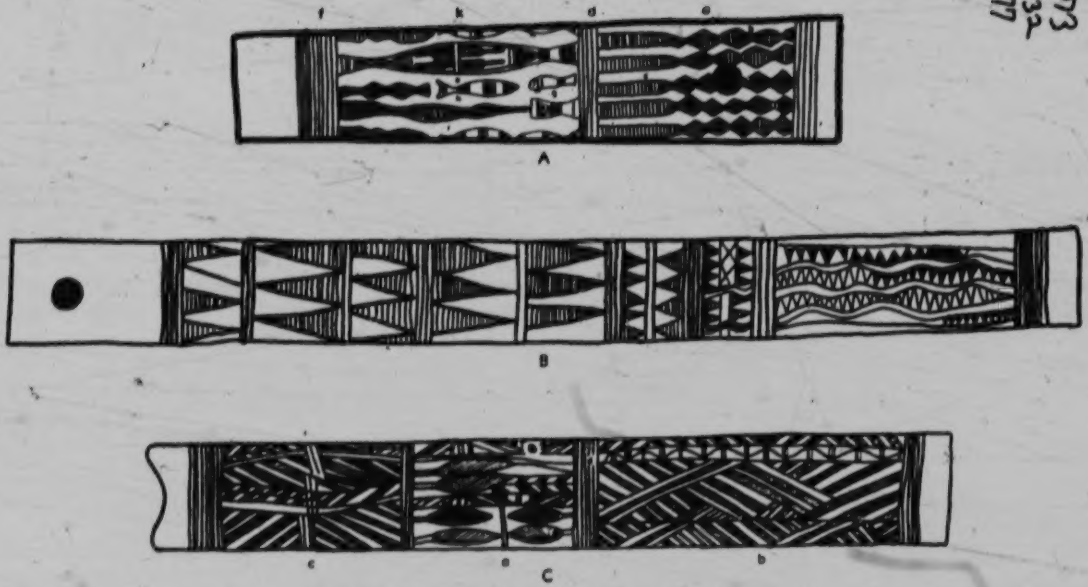

Fig. 68. Engraved smoking pipes, Yirrkalla

A The man, Wanamungaria B The wrecked canoe at Port Bradshaw C The man, Tualpa

*773 *532 The yams are engraved in panel *a*, and their foliage indicated by the decorative chevron-like designs at *b* and *c*. The pattern *d* on the upper right, with a meandering line down the centre, is a small fresh-water stream near the totemic place.

The Man, Tualpa, and the Sacred Tree of Blue Mud Bay

This painted pipe represents a sacred tree which once grew on the shores of Blue Mud Bay. One day a man (unnamed), not knowing that the tree was sacred, cut it down to make a special spear, called *bunungara*. *Tualpa*, the owner of the tree, was so angry over the vandalism that he speared the culprit. [623] The dead tree now lies at the mouth of a lagoon emptying into Blue Mud Bay. During the wet season it is submerged by the fresh water flowing from the swamps into the sea. When the swamps are dry, the log is sometimes covered by the high tide.

The transverse bands, *e*, *e*, on Pl. 128B represent the tide marks on the tree; the cross-hatched panel, *a*, the fresh water; and *b*, *c* and *d*, the sea-water, which during the dry season alternately covers and uncovers the tree trunk.

The Four Jiritja Men of Melville Bay

During *bamun* (creation times) four *jiritja* men,[83] *Djamburi*, *Wanatpai*, *Dandarunga* and *Kainoltja*, created a number of natural features at each of their camps along the shores of Melville Bay.

Plate 128A is the complete design of the painted pipe: *a* is *Djamburi*, *b* is *Wanatpai*,[84] *c* *Dandarunga*, and *e* *Kainoltja*. Each of these men is smoking a pipe. The four squares at *f* are four wells, each man having his own. Their footprints are in panel *e*.

3. BODY PAINTINGS

302 *532 619 881 [424] In north-eastern Australia the art of body painting is most important, for it is by means of the designs painted on the novices during the various age-grading ceremonies, and on the fully initiated men whilst engaged in their totemic rituals, that the totem, the clan group, *mala*, and the linguistic group, *mata*, of each individual can be recognized. As far as the present evidence goes (the investigation is far from complete) it seems that each *mata*, which may include several *mala*, has its own specific design, which is the personal property of that group and cannot be used by any other.[85] During the circumcision ceremonies[86]

[616 276 424] [83] It is the mythical men of the *jiritja* moiety only who smoke. It is of interest to notice that the four men depicted on this pipe are not smoking the long Malay pipe, but one which resembles those used by our own party, called by the aborigines *Baijini* pipes. Nowadays all aborigines smoke, but a member of one moiety will not use a pipe decorated with the designs of the opposite moiety without the owner's permission. If he did so, the spirit of the pipe would make him ill.

[84] See bark painting of *Wanatpai*, Pl. 95B.

[85] See myth of the origin of the design of the crabs, *gunjun*, p. 298.

[86] In north-eastern Arnhem Land the boys are circumcised when they are from six to eight years of age.

[text continues on p.402]

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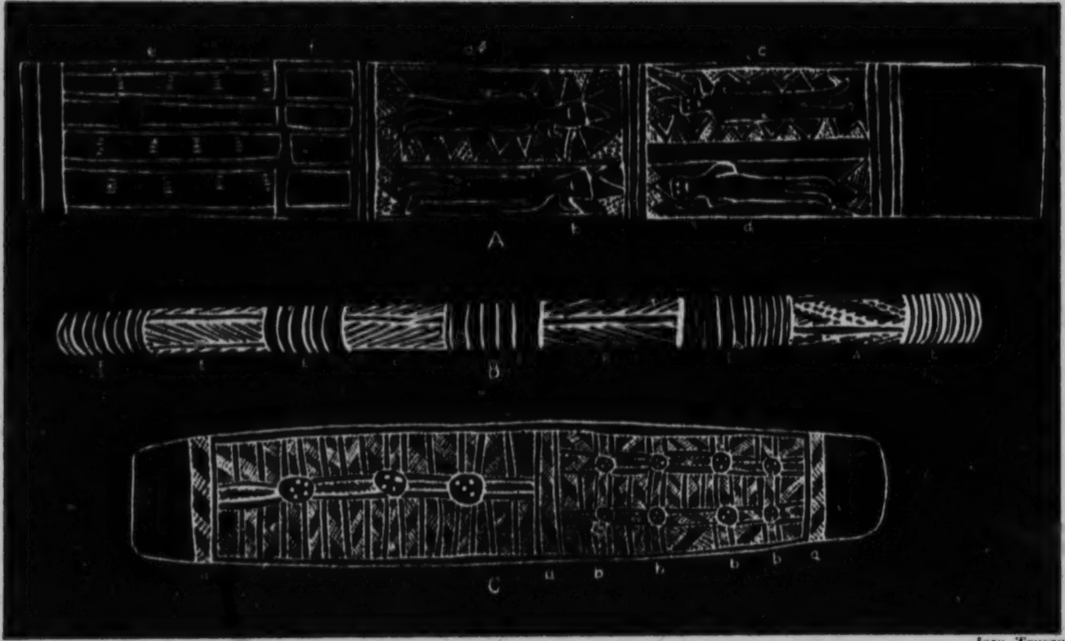

Jean Truran

PLATE 128. Painted pipes and ceremonial object, Yirrkalla

A The four jiritja men of Melville Bay B The man, Tualpa, and the sacred tree C The geese, wurumatji

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881 I witnessed at Yirrkalla each of the four boys was painted with the *mata* design of
619 the particular language group to which he belonged.* The design would be his
*532 throughout life and even at death would be painted on his body. I found out
the *mata* of each body painting, its meaning and its associated myth.

The Water-lily, Jouku, and the Wild Bees, Kamou, of Blue Mud Bay

302 The myth of an unidentified totemic water-lily, *jouku*, belonging to the
*532 *jiritja* moiety of the Matamatani swamps is associated with several other totemic
*773 beings, the man *Wanamungaria*,[87] the man *Ngulamung*,[88] the teredo worm,
616 *kaula-warak*, the queen fish, *tinimbu*,[89] the opossum, *marungo*, and the night-bird, *karawak*.[90] The wild bees, *kamou*, are also associated with the Matamatani swamps. These totemic bees, when disturbed by a bush-fire, flew to Milingimbi to escape destruction.[91]

Plate 129A illustrates the body painting of a *jiritja* boy of the *mangilili-dalwongu matas* of the Blue Mud Bay areas, the designs on the torso belonging to the *mangilili mata* (Fig. 64K) and those on the legs to the *dalwongu* (Fig. 64J). The central vertical panel represents a river at the totemic place of the water-lily, *jouku*, the U-shaped figure at the top being a large rock in the bed of that river. On the right-hand side of the abdomen is a fresh-water fish, *bittu*. The remainder of the paintings on the body are symbolical of either the blossoms or the leaves of the water-lily, *jouku*. The diamonds on the upper legs refer to hives of wild bees at the Matamatani swamps.[92]

The Man, Djunkgao, and his Sister, Madalait

The body designs[93] shown on Pl. 129B were painted on a *dua* boy of the *riredjingu mata* of Port Bradshaw (Fig. 64D). The three horizontal cross-hatched bands under the left armpit symbolize the waves of the sea which attracted *Djunkgao's* attention when he was beaching his canoe at Bilapinja Island.[94] The vertical panels immediately below are coastal sand-hills at Jelangbara, north of Port Bradshaw, and the long vertical panels on the right-hand side of the body are further parallel sand-hills which *Djunkgao* and his sister admired.[95] The horizontal bands across the left hip are the lines of sand which ran down the sides of a drifting sand-hill at Jelangbara, where the lizard, *tjunda*, walked along the crest.[96] The designs on the upper legs also indicate the sand running down the side of the same sand-hill.

**Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, p. 13.

[87] Engraved pipe. Fig. 63A.

[88] Engraved pipe. Fig. 62D.

[89] Bark painting. Pl. 108C.

[90] Bark painting. Pl. 115E.

[91] Bark painting. Pl. 93B.

[92] Bark painting. Pl. 93B.

[93] These and similar designs are used extensively in picturing the myth of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* at Port Bradshaw.

[94] Pl. 85E.

[95] Pl. 86D.

[96] Pl. 86B.

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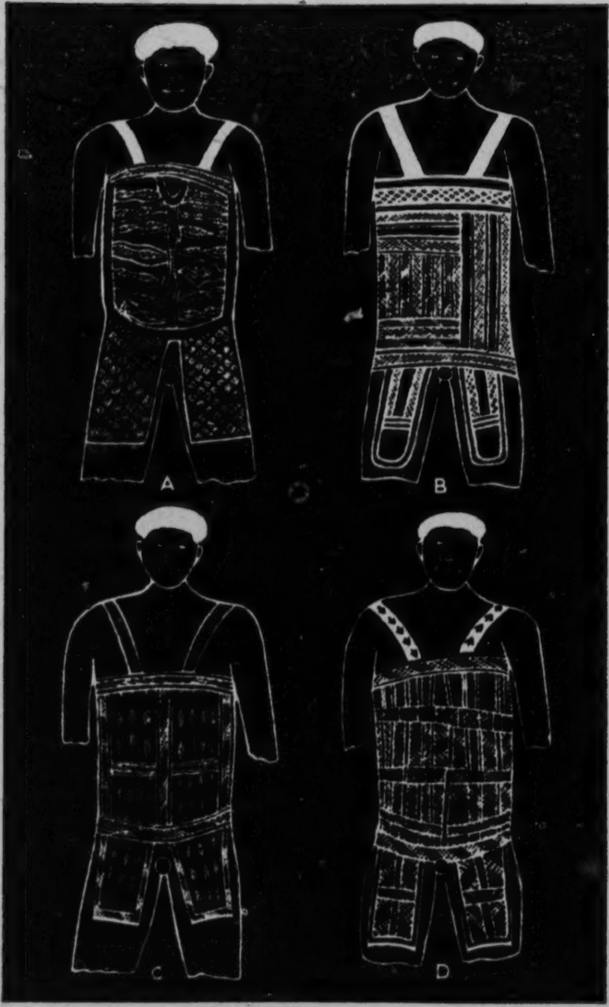

PLATE 129. Body designs of initjates, Yirrkalla

A The water-lilies, jouku, and the fish, biltu
B Djunkgao and Madalait
C The bush-fire and the eucalyptus trees
D The geese, wurumatji

The Bush-fire and the Eucalyptus Trees of the Gainmaui Swamp, Caledon Bay

*773 *532 [828] During creation times some men, whilst performing a ceremony at the Gainmaui swamp, south of Caledon Bay, left a camp-fire unattended. The fire spread, burning the whole countryside, including the men themselves.[97] They are now white-barked eucalyptus trees, *guriri*, which, at certain times in the year, shed small flakes of bark from their trunks, exposing the whiter bark underneath.

[616] Plate 129C pictures the body painting of a *jiritja* boy of the *gumaitj mata* of Caledon Bay. The vertical cross-hatched panels on the body are three totemic eucalyptus trees at the Gainmaui swamp and the three transverse panels across the shoulders, abdomen and hips, their branches. The vertical lines of lozenge-shaped designs[98] on the body and the legs have two meanings, the bush-fire caused by the careless men, and the white patches on the trunks of the totemic eucalyptus trees.

The Geese, Wurumatji, of Duwalaila Swamp, Arnhem Bay

During creation times a flock of geese, *wurumatji*,[99] lived on the Duwalaila swamp, situated to the west of Arnhem Bay. Their food was *rakia*, the bulbs of the spike rush. One day the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*,[1] when travelling over the Duwalaila swamp of Arnhem Bay in a storm, called out (thundered) so loudly that the geese took fright and flew westward to the swamps south of Milingimbi, where they have remained ever since.

[616] Plate 129D pictures the body painting of a *dua* boy of the *jambakbinwa mata* of western Arnhem Bay. The black squares throughout the design are the fresh-water swamps at Duwalaila, the one-time home of the *wurumatji*. The white dots within the squares are either the bulbs of *rakia* or white stones on the bottom of the swamp. The vertical bands joining the black squares indicate the paths made by the geese, *wurumatji*, as they walked from one swamp to the other in search of food, and the horizontal cross-hatched bands which link the squares, fresh-water streams flowing between the swamps. The bands across the shoulders and the hips are low ranges of hills near by. Goose tracks entering and leaving the swamp are indicated on the white bands passing over the shoulders. Cross-hatching throughout the painting is symbolical of the muddy water stirred up by the geese as they searched in the bottom of the swamp for the bulbs of the spike rush.

4. SAND FIGURES

532 857 Whilst at Yirrkalla we often watched the aboriginal children moulding figures of various creatures in the sand, or scratching them on the wet surface of the seashore, usually with the points of their fingers. Some of the children were particularly dexterous. Plate 91C is a sand drawing of a goanna and Pl. 91D a moulded figure of a fish. 532 857

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[97] For more complete myth, see p. 293.

[98] The same design is used on a number of bark paintings, Pl. 93D, Pl. 90B, C. It is a *mata* design of the *gumaitj* language group, Fig. 61X.

[99] See sacred object, Pl. 128C.

[1] For myth of *Tjambuwal* at Arnhem Bay, see p. 290.

In Central Australia, I often saw the aboriginal children drawing simple figures on the sides of the drifting sand-hills. Barrett and Croll[2] illustrate figures of dugongs, sharks, crocodiles and even a lugger in sail, which the aborigines of the Wessel Islands had scooped in the sand. [171]

5. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND DESIGN 61

The social organization of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land dominates every aspect of their social, ceremonial, philosophical and cultural life. 621 114

Warner[3] published a list of the clans (which we now call *mala*), the high and low totems of each clan, the language groups (*mata*) and the names of the totemic waterholes. This list is by far the most valuable information we have on the subject. Warner,[4] however, although obviously puzzled about the matter, made the mistake of grouping the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land into tribes instead of clans, failing to recognize that the clan was the most powerful unit.

Thomson,[5] when referring to the same social organization, pointed out Warner's mistake, and at the same time defined the word *malla* (my *mala*) as referring to a strong patrilineal group linked together by the same totemic ancestors. Elkin and the Berndts[6] list some of the *dua* and *jiritja* clans (*mala*) and language groups (*mata*). I also was able to obtain additional data on the subject. Nevertheless, our knowledge of the *malas* and *matas* is still very incomplete.

As my research on the art of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land developed, however, it became evident that the effects of this social organization was as powerful in the realms of pictorial art as it is in other aspects of their culture. I found that aborigines who had totemic ancestors in common were using designs on their bark paintings and other art objects which were unlike those employed by men of different clan affiliations. Inquiries also revealed that many, perhaps all, of these designs, the property of any particular language group or *mata*, had been handed down to them by one or another of their mythical totemic ancestors.[7] 532* 61 [428]

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[2] Barrett and Croll (1943), Pl. 71, facing p. 76. [3] Warner (1937), pp. 39-51.

[4] Warner (1937), p. 35, writes: 'The tribes of northeastern Arnhem Land . . . are very weak social units, and when measured by the ordinary definitions of what constitutes a tribe fail almost completely.'

[5] Thomson (1949), p. 11. [6] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23.

[7] For origin of designs see myths of *Nguru-gajumeri* and the *gunjun* crab design, p. 290; *Banaitja* and the *jiritja* designs, p. 281; *borodji* the snake, and other *jiritja* designs, p. 369; *Djunkgao* and the light on the waves, the rising sun and the parallel lines of sand-hills, p. 273.

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It would seem, from the lists of the clan and language groups recorded by Warner, Elkin and the Berndts, and those of my own research, that the language groups, *matas*, spread over the boundaries of the clans, *malas*. It is with the language groups, *matas*, that the specific designs, the subject of this investigation, appear to belong.

During the limited period I was at Yirrkalla, the aborigines identified a sufficient number of designs, and the *matas* to which they belong, to reveal their relationships to each other. The designs identified, however, are but a small number of those in use. It would be necessary to spend a lengthy period among the aborigines and to travel extensively over their country before one could gather all the information relating to the *matas*, their localities and associated designs.

(1) THE JIRITJA MATA DESIGNS

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As mentioned in the myths,[8] it was the man *Laitjun* and the snake *borodji* who gave individual designs to all the *jiritja matas* throughout north-eastern Arnhem Land, so that each could recognize the other in the ceremonies. Eleven of these *mata* designs were painted on the wooden carved figure of *Laitjun*, 135A, B. Out of these the aborigines identified four on the various bark paintings, engraved pipes and wooden figures in my collection.

Figure 64J, painted on the left breast of the *Laitjun* figure, Pl. 135A, belongs to the *dalwongu mata* of Blue Mud Bay. The design refers to the hive of wild bees which, once lived at the Matamatawi swamp (Pl. 93B, g. myth, p. 293), but, when threatened by a bush-fire, escaped to Milingimbi. Similar designs, used on the bark paintings of the Milingimbi area, pictured hives of wild bees, Pl. 125D.

Figure 64K, painted on the left thigh of the *Laitjun* figure, belongs to the *mangalili mata* of Blue Mud Bay. It represents an unidentified water-lily, [illegible]. The same design was present on two engraved pipes, Fig. 59C, 62C, and on a body painting, Pl. 128A. All have the same meaning. On the bark painting, Pl 89C, this design refers to the body paintings on *Laitjun* and others.

Berndt[9] states that the *mangalili* design refers to a log at Blue Mud Bay. This may be so, because the toredo worm is associated with both the water-lily and the log mentioned by Berndt. It is almost certain that a *mata* design would refer to more than one myth.

Figure 64M and Fig. 64N are two of the designs belonging to the *gumaitj mata*.

Figure 64M, painted on the right leg of the *Laitjun* figure, pictures reefs of yellow ochre at Gurunga, near Caledon Bay. This design was present on a number of bark paintings (Pl. 118A being typical) and on an engraved pipe, Fig. 62C.

Figure 64N, the other *gumaitj* design, refers mainly to the bush-fire at Matamataui swamps near Caledon Bay and the events that followed. On Pl. 93B, *e*, the

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[8] Myth of *Laitjun*, p. 279; myth of the snake, *borodji*, p. 309.
[9] Berndt (1948), p. 318.

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design represents paper-bark and white-barked eucalyptus trees damaged by the bush-fire; on Pl. 93B, *f*, swamp paper-bark trees; on Pl. 116D, the bandicoot and the fire which destroyed his home; on Pl. 117B, crocodiles and lily leaves; and on Pl. 129C (on the body painting of an initiate), a bush-fire and eucalyptus trees. Berndt[10] states that one of the *gumaitj* designs refer to bark being stripped from a tree.

Figure 64H is an unidentified design commonly used by members of the *gumaitj mata* of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw.[11] It is present on almost all the bark paintings relating to the *Baijini* (Pl. 107D being typical): on many others associated with the totemic creatures of Cape Arnhem (Pl. 108B, for example); on the painted paddles (Pl. 109B); on an engraved pipe (Fig. 63B); and on the carved and painted figures of the *Baijini* (Pl. 139F, G). In general, this design is a symbol for clouds. As only *gumaitj jiritja* artists from Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem used this design, it is almost certainly associated with that *mata*.

(2) THE DUA MATA DESIGNS

Although not able to obtain a myth explaining the origin of the *dua mata* designs, I gathered the specific names and details of six of them.

Figure 64A is a *djapu mata* design from the Caledon Bay area. It appears to have several meanings. On the bark painting, Pl. 119B, associated with the totemic shark, *mana*, the design illustrates fallen palm leaves lying on the surface of the swamp. On the bark painting, Pl. 89B, and on the engraved pipe, Fig. 60C, both of which belong to the thunder-man, *Bolngo*, at Wulwulwi, it refers to running water, and on the painted coffin of a man of the water totem, Pl. 101B, the same design pictures sea-water.

Figure 64B belongs to the *duralili mata* of Arnhem Bay. It was drawn by an old *dua* aboriginal to show me the *mata* design of his people. It is not present on any of the art objects in the collection.

Figure 64C is the design of the *nainmeri mata* of Arnhem Bay. This, like Fig. 64B, was drawn by a *dua* aboriginal to show me his *mata*. On Pl. 87C it pictures plain and swamp country near Arnhem Bay, associated with *Djunkgao* and his sister.

Figure 64D, the design of the *rirrdjingu mata* of Port Bradshaw, belongs, in its various forms, to the myth of *Djunkgao* and his sister, *Madalait*. The central panel refers to the lizard, *tjunda*, and the running sand and the cross-hatched panels on either side, to parallel sand-hills and light reflected from the waves at Port Bradshaw. Pl. 86A is typical. The long cross-hatched panels are commonly used on bark paintings depicting other incidents in the journey of *Djunkgao* and his sister (Pl. 85C); on the carved and painted figures of these two ancestors (Pl. 131A, B); and on the body painting of an initiate (Pl. 129D).

On Fig. 64E, the *ngeimil mata* design of Arnhem Bay, the running sand

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[10] Berndt (19[illegible]), p. 318.

[11] Map, Fig. 57.

[text continues on p. 409]

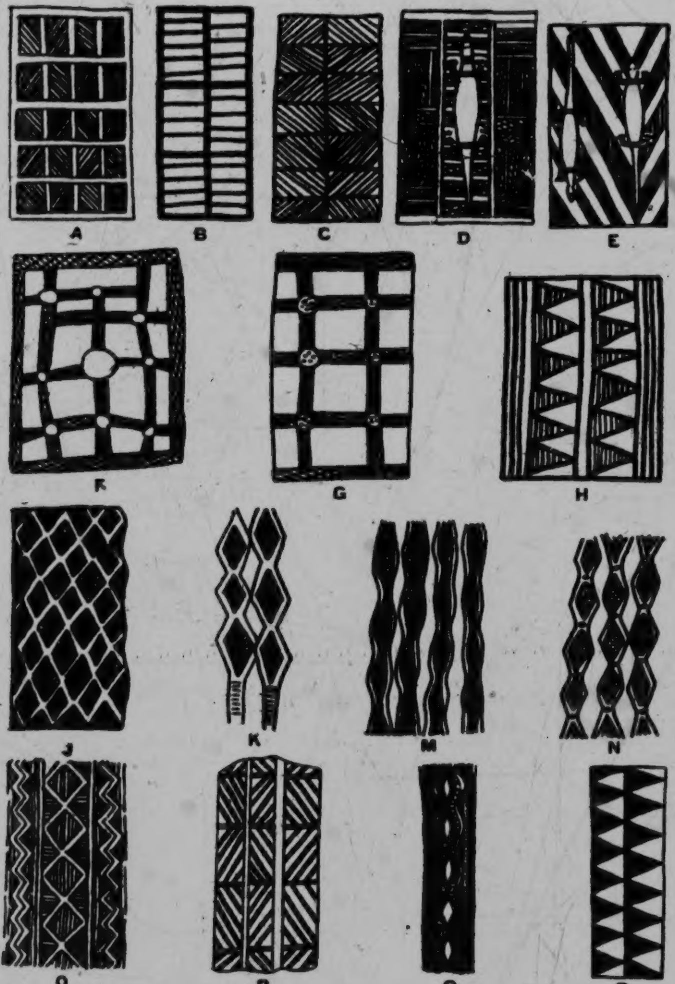

FIG. 64. Clan designs, Yirrkalla

A Djapu B [illegible]uralili C Nainmeri D Riredjingu E Ngeimil
F Unidentified G Djambarpingu H, M, N Gumaitj J Dalwongu
K Mangilili O, Q, R Cloth designs, Celebes P Smoking pipe, New Guinea

design of the *riredjingu mata* of Port Bradshaw changes to sloping lines which 61
symbolize fallen palm leaves. This *ngeimil* design is used on a bark painting, 532*
Pl. 123A, and an engraved pipe, Fig. 64A. 773*

Figure 64F is an unidentified design associated with the *Djunkgao* sisters west of Arnhem Bay. Although it is not certain that this is a *mata* design, the fact that it is used on two bark paintings, Pl. 87A, B, associated with waterholes belonging to the *Djunkgao* sisters, suggests that it might be so.

Figure 64G is the *djambarpingu mata* design. It represents the geese, *wurumatji*, and their tracks at the Duwalaila swamps east of Arnhem Bay. This design [302]
was painted on a sacred object, Pl. 128C, and on the body of an initiate, Pl. 129D. The *djambarpingu mata* is an excellent example of how a *mata* (language group) spreads over a number of *mala* (clan groups). According to Warner,[12] the *djambarpingu* language group includes the following adjacent clans or *malas*: *liagaomir, djirin, gwiyula, djapu, naladaer* and *djawark*. Further research will, no doubt, reveal that this characteristic applies to a number of the language groups.

THE POSSIBLE ORIGIN OF THE MATA DESIGNS 174

An examination of Indonesian art revealed that many of the *jiritja mata* 177
designs from north-eastern Arnhem Land are present in the art of the Central 532*
Celebes. As the Celebes and other Indonesian islands are north-west, and the natives from those islands sailed to Australia on the north-west wet-season wind, returning to their homes on the dry-season south-easterly, it is not surprising that their art motifs should have diffused among the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land, particularly among those of the *jiritja* moiety, who have adopted all the later innovations of the Asiatic trepangers and the white man—for example tobacco, wooden canoes, the Malay smoking pipe and so on. As mentioned previously (p. 325), the *dua* moiety possesses the older things, bark canoes, spear-throwers and stone spears. Nevertheless, one of the *dua mata* designs, the *djapu*, Fig. 64A, was found on an engraved smoking pipe from southern New Guinea.

Figure 64O, a cloth design from the Central Celebes,[13] somewhat resembles the *mangalili jiritja mata* design painted on the left thigh of *Laitjun*, Pl. 135A.

Figure 64Q, another cloth design from the same area,[14] resembles the *gumaitj mata* design (Fig. 64N).

Figure 64R, also a cloth design from the Central Celebes,[15] is similar to the triangular *jiritja* cloud symbol from Cape Arnhem.[16] This design, which is common in Central Celebian art, was also found on a wooden drum from the Tugeri tribe, Dutch New Guinea.[17] According to the aboriginal who engraved

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[12] Warner (1937), pp. 43-6.

[13] Kaudern (1944), A, Fig. 166.

[14] Kaudern (1944), 2, Pl. LXIII.

[15] Kaudern (1944), 3, Pl. XXIV.

[16] Pl. 107D.

[17] Collection of South Australian Museum, No. A9286.

174
177 the smoking pipe illustrated in Fig. 63B, this triangular pattern was engraved on
*532 a canoe which had been cast up on the beach near Port Bradshaw.

Figure 64P, a rubbing from a smoking pipe from southern New Guinea,[18] is almost a duplicate of the *dua djapu mata* design, Fig. 61A.

CONCLUSIONS

171 The art of the north-east coast differs from the art of the rest of Arnhem Land in several important respects: (a) it is more complicated and colourful; (b) there
*532 are a number of alien symbols which indicate that it has been influenced by sources outside Australia, but that this influence is of comparatively recent origin; and (c) certain designs are the exclusive property of specified groups of aborigines.

(a) Whereas the basic art of Arnhem Land consists of single or multiple figures on a plain ground, that on the north-eastern coasts has a wide range of designs, skilfully and interestingly arranged within the painting area. There are few open spaces, as in the basic art, the background of almost all of the paintings being filled in with attractive arrangements of cross-hatching in red, yellow, black and white. The designs, their pleasing arrangement and the colourful textures of the cross-hatching, make the art of north-eastern Arnhem Land the most decorative that we know of in Australia. In contrast with the Oenpelli art, however, that of the north-east has no unusual designs such as X-ray and 'hocker' figures, 'joint marks', men with hook-shaped faces. Nor does it, like the *Mimi* art of Oenpelli, depict human beings in action.

The art of the north-east is essentially a static art with all the subjects at rest. The north-eastern art also has a number of abstract designs which cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist who produced them.

177 (b) All evidence suggests that many of the elements in the decorative north-
171 eastern art are of recent origin. It is known that the aborigines, about two
*532 generations ago, adopted the practice of carving human figures in the round from their Indonesian visitors and it is likely that they have copied, from the same source, many of the complicated art forms, cross-hatched designs, and at least some of the symbols used by the clan and language groups.

Pobassoo, the Macassan chief, told Flinders, when they met in the Malay Roads during 1803,[19] that twenty years previously he was the first Indonesian to visit the north-eastern coast of Arnhem Land. If Pobassoo's statement was correct, and we have no evidence as yet to the contrary, then we can assume that the aborigines of those parts had not been subject to foreign influences before that date. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that the art of the north-eastern Arnhem Land has not spread far inland. It is confined to a limited area near the coast, even though the myths and ceremonies depicted on the bark

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[18] Collection of South Australian Museum, No. A10281.
[19] Flinders (1814), vol. 2, p. 229.

paintings and other art objects are performed, with little variation, over most 532*
of Arnhem Land (Fig. 2). 171
(c) Another characteristic of the art of north-eastern Arnhem Land is that [177]
certain designs, or arrangements of designs, are the exclusive property of individual clan or language groups. Some of these, according to the myths, were first [424]
produced by a mythical forbear, the ancestor of the totemic group which owns that particular design. The fact that many of these are present in the art of the Celebes suggests a link between the two areas and is worthy of more investigation.

PART FIVE

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CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[P. 413]
[P. 412 contains no text]

5

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

THE DECORATED FIGURES and objects collected in Arnhem Land can be grouped in four classes: Human and animal figures, carved in wood, moulded in wax or made from bark, belonging to both north-eastern Arnhem Land and Groote Eylandt; the human penis; carved and painted ceremonial objects associated with ancestral beings and totemic groups of western Arnhem Land; and decorated implements and weapons. 532* [171]

Human and Animal Figures. It has been known for many years that the aborigines of Australia, and especially of Arnhem Land, produced carved representations of men and women in wood. Warner,[1] during 1926-9, saw at Milingimbi mortuary posts four to five feet long, erected over the graves of the dead, on which 'a series of incisions may be made at the top . . . to give it the appearance of a carved "head" with one or more necks.' Worms,[2] in 1942, records carved human figures used in the Goranara ceremony of the Kimberley regions of north-western Australia. In 1948,[3] and again in 1949,[4] the Berndts described wooden figures from Yirrkalla in north-eastern Arnhem Land, and in 1953 Mountford[5] records a wooden figure from the Durack Ranges of north-western Australia.* The aborigines of Yirrkalla also make human figures in bark and wax. Worms[6] illustrates similar bark figures used in the Goranara ceremony, and McConnel[7] a figure in wax from Cape York, Queensland. During the expedition's stay at Yirrkalla, I collected a number of human figures made in wood, wax and bark. 532* 171 [764] [237]

Animal figures carved in the round have been found over a much wider area than have the human figures. Spencer[8] illustrates a carved turtle and a fish from Oenpelli. There is also in the South Australian Museum collection a carved crocodile from Cape York, a dugong from Melville Island, fish from both Elcho and Goulburn Islands, and carved reptiles and animals from the Nullarbor Plains of South Australia. Further research will, no doubt, show a much more extensive distribution of this type of handicraft than the present evidence indicates.

The Human Penis. A number of specimens of the human penis, in stone and wood, have been collected both in central and north-western Australia and in Arnhem Land. Campbell[9] illustrates two penes carved in stone and one in wood from north-western Australia; Mountford[10] figures two stone sub-incised penes from the same area, as well as a stone circumcised penis and a ceremonial knife

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[1] Warner (1937), p. 504.
[2] Worms (1942), Pls. 1, 7.
[3] Berndts (1948), Pls. 1-2.
[4] Berndts (1949), Pls. 1-3.
[5] Mountford (1953), Pl. 1, Figs. C, D.

* Since going to press, Mountford has seen the aborigines of Melville Island carving human figures in the round.

[6] Worms (1942), Pl. 6.
[7] McConnel (1953), Pl. XVII, Fig. F.
[8] Spencer (1928), Pl. XVI.
[9] Campbell (1921), p. 145.
[10] Mountford (1938), Pl. 8, Figs. A, B, E, G, I

[P. 414 CONTAINS NO TEXT]

*532 171 from Central Australia. Balfour[11] also figures a stone penis which is linked with the myth of the rain-man from Korporilja, near Hermannsburg, Central Australia.[12]

W. E. Harney, whilst with the expedition, found a carved wooden penis associated with a mythical man, *Borolo-borolo*, set up in the middle of a saline flat.[13]

The examples of the human penis, particularly those carved in stone, exhibit a remarkable skill in the shaping of this hard material. They constitute an ethnological problem in a continent where the working of stone has not reached a high level.

Carved and Painted Ceremonial Objects. Whilst the expedition was at Oenpelli the aborigines brought in a number of sacred objects, most of them from the Liverpool River area, belonging to mythical creatures and their increase ceremonies. Spencer[14] illustrates a number of these objects.

[411] *Decorated Implements and Weapons.* Although the shield and the boomerang (two objects which aborigines in other parts of Australia spend much time decorating) are not used in Arnhem Land, many of the paddles and spear-throwers are painted with designs which, almost without exception, refer to some myth. The aborigines also engrave designs on their long smoking pipes.

1. HUMAN FIGURES IN WOOD AND THEIR CEREMONIAL OBJECTS. YIRRKALLA

*532 177 *Human Figures carved in wood.* At Yirrkalla I collected nine full-length wooden human figures and eight heads, all of which represented either mythological or spirit people.

Origin. Inquiries about the carved human figures of north-eastern Arnhem Land proved that they are of comparatively recent origin.

[764] *Mauwulan*,[15] an aboriginal about fifty years of age, remembers, when he was a small boy, seeing an old Macassan trepanger, *Bopalindi*, show his father, *Duankin*, how to carve a human head on the top of a burial post. This post *Bopalindi* later placed as a memorial on the grave of a dead Macassan.[16] *Duankin* spent much time carving a similar post, which he took to the Macassan for criticism. *Bopalindi*, when congratulating the old man on his effort, suggested that the aborigines, like the people of his own country, should place similar posts on the graves of their dead so that they would not be forgotten so quickly.

Duankin taught his son, *Mauwulan*, the art of carving the mortuary posts,[17] he in turn passing the knowledge to others. As the aboriginal craftsmen became more expert they experimented with the carved figures until at the present time 532+ they are able to produce a creditable representation of the human form (see Pl. 135A, B).

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[11] Balfour (1951), p. 206.

[12] I have not personally examined this specimen but from the illustration it appears to be a natural stone, bearing a remarkable resemblance to a penis. Mountford (1938c), Pl. 8, Fig. C, illustrates a similar example.

[13] Pl. 110C; myth.-p. 311.

[14] Spencer (1928). Figs. 542, 543, Pl. XVI.

[115] [15] *Mauwulan*, one of my best informants (Pl. 4A) carved many of these wooden figures for me. He did the same for Mr and Mrs Berndt.

[16] Berndts (1949) describe a Macassan burial.

[17] See example, Pl. 136C.

From that time until comparatively recently the *jiritja*[18] men adopted the 764 Macassan custom of using carved grave posts, but only when the body was buried 616 instead of being placed on a platform. When a *jiritja* man died, his moiety asked a *dua* man to carve a mortuary post to place on the grave.[19] Later, when the 532+ body was disinterred and the burial dances were being performed a *jiritja* man, taking the mortuary post with him, went from camp to camp collecting food for the participants in the burial rituals.[20] At the completion of the meal the post was replaced on the empty grave.

The chief interest of the carved human figures lies in the fact that in a little 532* over two generations the aborigines, without the help and for most of the time 177 without even the knowledge of the white man, have taken a simple post figure of foreign origin and through improvement of techniques can now carve in wood heads and full-length human figures of considerable merit.

The Rev. F. W. Chaseling, when a missionary at Yirrkalla, was the first to 532* discover that the aborigines of that locality were carving the human figure in 797 the round. This discovery came about in a curious manner. When King George V 114 died, Chaseling, in one of his sermons, expressed grief at the great loss the nation had suffered. This sermon and the concern of the missionary over the loss of his king so impressed *Mauwulan* that he carved a mortuary post,[21] similar to those used on the *jiritja* graves, but which was supposed to resemble the King. This post *Mauwulan* presented to the missionary so that he would be reminded of his dead monarch. Chaseling, in 1938, realizing the importance of his discovery, presented the mortuary post to the Australian Museum, Sydney. Unfortunately the Museum authorities, unaware that the post was a unique example of aboriginal handicraft, did not describe it in a scientific journal.

I was able to examine this figure early in 1949. It was the head of a bearded man (Pl. 138C, D) cut on the end of a hardwood post about four feet long and five inches in diameter. The face, about five inches long, consisted of eyes, a nose, lips and ears; the ears, however, being somewhat out of position.[22] The body of the pole is decorated with ceremonial string.

I also collected at Yirrkalla a number of human heads carved in wood, most 532+ of them representing spirit people or *Mokoi* who live in the surrounding jungles 776 and eucalyptus forests.

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[18] This was because the aborigines made *Bopalindi* a member of the *jiritja* moiety.

[19] According to Warner (1937), p. 434, at Milingimbi burial posts are placed on the graves.

[20] Warner (1937), p. 433, describes this food-collecting ritual at Milingimbi, and the Berndts (1949), p. 216, at Yirrkalla.

[21] Warner (1937), p. 501, refers to a burial post being erected on the aboriginal graves at Milingimbi. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 40, record the finding of a burial post figure at the same locality.

[22] I am indebted to the Australian Museum, Sydney, for the photograph of this specimen, E.46535, and the relevant details.

*532 [178] The aborigines told me that, prior to the visit of Mr and Mrs Berndt to Yirrkalla during 1947, they had not carved these small heads. But when they made one and showed it to Mr and Mrs Berndt, the interest shown stimulated them to make more.[23] These little examples of aboriginal craftsmanship, many showing evidence of considerable skill, prove the ability of the aboriginal craftsmen to adapt themselves to changing conditions.

*532 881 114 *Function.* Elkin and the Berndts[24] state that the carved figures they illustrate of 'the Elder Wauwelak Sister, the Great Laintjung, and Laintjung's son Banaitja' are shown only to initiated men. They write: "The original artist who has made the figure enters the hut; outside, the postulants are sitting or standing with faces turned away, but when the songman begins to clap his sticks, they are led up to look upon the sacred object. Finally, when the singing is completed, the designs on the figure are explained and discussed. At times, during the showing of the object, the figure may be held ritually by an actor who writhes on the ground like the python who swallowed the Wauwelak sisters.'

During my last visit to Yirrkalla (1952) I questioned the aborigines about these statements. The men of both moieties were emphatic that they were incorrect and that the carved figures they had produced for Mr Berndt and me are purely secular and would not be used in any of the secret rituals.[25]

They explained, however, that pole figures (similar to the Chaseling figure) representing *Djunkgao* and his sister *Madalait* are kept in special huts near the ceremonial grounds where the *Djunkgao* ceremonies are being performed. The figure of *Djunkgao* is shown to all the initiated men, but that of *Madalait* to only a few of the older tribal leaders.

*532 778 The pole figures of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* are carved in hard wood, painted with the appropriate designs and decorated with *dua* ceremonial string. At the completion of the rituals the string is removed for future use and the posts, with other sacred objects, buried in the mud of a sacred waterhole.[26] The following year the same figures are taken out, re-painted and re-decorated. They usually last about three years.

*532 The carved figures in my collection, *Tjambuwal*, *Laitjun*, or even the carved figures of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*, would not have been used in any sacred ceremonies. They were produced because the native men enjoyed making them and because we were interested.

*532 177 322 *Methods of Manufacture.* During the last war there was a large Air Force camp near Yirrkalla where, at one time or another, most of the able-bodied aborigines were employed. During that time the aborigines not only learned the

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[23] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 9, illustrate a number of the carved heads collected by Mr and Mrs Berndt.

[24] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 50.

[25] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 58, state that the carved heads 'are shown to novices at initiation, and to postulants at ceremonies of revelation'.

[26] Warner (1937), p. 376, describes how the sacred objects of the *dua narra* ceremonies (analogous to those of *Djunkgao* at Yirrkalla) are buried in the mud of the sacred totemic waterhole.

use of steel tools, but acquired for themselves a stock of jungle knives, tomahawks, 532*
wood rasps and files. With these tools the aborigines cut and filed the wooden 177
figures into shape with much dexterity. 322

In sharp contrast to these facts is the account given by Elkin and the Berndts.[27] When describing the manufacture of the carved figures at Yirrkalla, these authors wrote: "The artist chips it [the figure] skilfully with a knife or a broad "shovel-nosed" spear-point. . . . The artist spends several days[28] carving in the details and scraping the surface smooth with a knife blade, rough stone or piece of shark's skin "sand paper"."

As Mr and Mrs Berndt were at Yirrkalla less than a year previous to our arrival (the Air Force camp at that time had not long been disbanded) the aborigines would then have had as many, if not more, steel tools than at the time of our visit. It is not reasonable therefore to expect that the aborigines would have been using the primitive tools reported by Elkin and the Berndts.

Tjambuwal, the Thunder-man, and his Ceremonial Objects

Two figures of the mythical thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*, were collected, Pl. 776
130A, B, and Pl. 130E, F; myth, p. 282.

Associated with these carved figures are five ceremonial objects used in the 778
dua ceremonies of the thunder-man. They are: the club, *burungunda* (Pl. 130D), 532*
with which *Tjambuwal* strikes the cliff; the spear, *larapan* (Pl. 130J), with which he spears the rock cod, *akurata*; the club, *barlait* (Pl. 130C), with which he kills the fish; the ceremonial object, *munan* (Pl. 130G, H), symbolizing the loops of clouds, *wulmu*, belonging to the thunder-man; and the yam, *bualku* or *bawal* (Pl. 131E) created from the fragments of the club, *burungunda*.

The symbolism of the designs on the *Tjambuwal* figure, Pl. 130A, B, refers 773*
to the time when, at the beginning of the wet season, he strikes the cliffs at
Jalboa headland (Pl. 91E) with his club and throws the white stones, *milarik* 532*
(Pl. 91F) into the sky. These stones quickly increase in size until they become large cumulus clouds, in which *Tjambuwal* travels from place to place.

The two lines meeting at an angle across the front of the figure (Pl. 130B), and the diagonal lines across the back, symbolize crevices which *Tjambuwal* made in Jalboa headland when he struck it with his club, *burungunda* (Pl. 130D). The vertical lines on the back of the head (Pl. 130A) symbolize falling rain, and the arc-shaped panels on both the back and the front of the figure, the gutters in the distorted rock strata of the cliffs at Jalboa, which were supposedly formed when *Tjambuwal* urinated on the cliff.

The symbolism of the designs on the second figure of *Tjambuwal*, illustrated on Pl. 130E, F, is somewhat different. The spots on the diagonal band across the chest of the figure (Pl. 130E) picture the white stones, *milarik*, at Jalboa headland (Pl. 91F). The curving lines to the right of this band are cumulus clouds,

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[27] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 49.

[28] The more expert of the aboriginal craftsmen I saw in 1948 were able to complete and paint a human figure in about seven hours, and a carved head in four.

[text continues on p 421]

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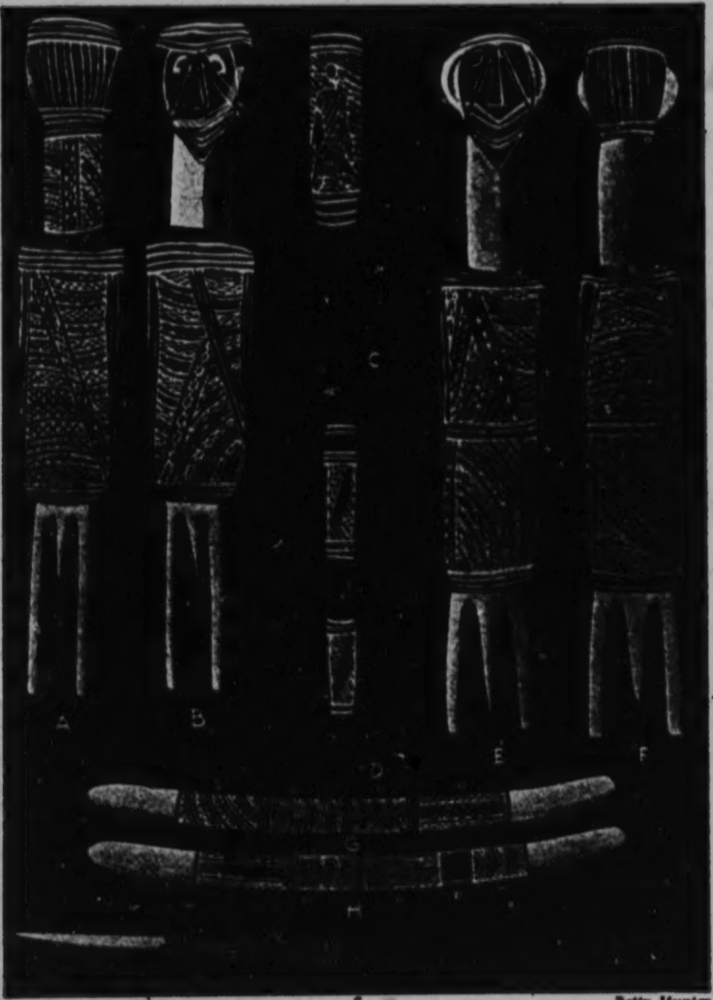

Betty Hunter

PLATE 150. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B, E, F Tjamberoal C The club, barlait D The club, burungunda
G, H The ceremonial object, munan J The spear, larapan

and those to the left, dark-coloured nimbus clouds. The curving lines across the 773* back of the figure (Pl. 130F) represent the thin black stratus clouds, *taioutbut*, 532* which often form in the sky after a thunderstorm has expended itself. The curved panels across the abdomen of the figure are waves made by *Tjambuwal* as he wades through the water in pursuit of the rock cod, *akurata*. The long penis on both figures represents the long curving banners of rain that fall from the base of the thunderstorms.

The Club, Burungunda. Plate 130D is the double-ended club,[29] *burungunda*, 773* with which *Tjambuwal* strikes the cliff at Jalboa headland at the beginning of the wet season. The impact shatters the club into many fragments; these frag- 778 ments enter the ground and later become the edible yam, *bualku*, which is called 532* *bawal* in the Arnhem Bay area (Pl. 131E).

The Spear, Larapan. Plate 130J is the spear, *larapan*. With this spear *Tjambuwal* transfixes the rock cod, *akurata*, before he leaves his cloud and enters the sea to kill it.[30]

When the aborigines see a meteor speed across the sky they believe its fiery 821 path is created by *Tjambuwal's* spear, *larapan*. The white head of the spear is the meteor itself, and the dots on its head, the white hailstones, *milarik*, at the Jalboa headland (Pl. 91E). The shaft of the spear is curved to represent the path of the meteor.

The Club, Barlait. Plate 130C illustrates the club, *barlait*, used by *Tjambuwal* to kill the rock cod, *akurata*, after he has speared it. On both sides of the club is a painting of the thunder-man with a club in each hand.[31] The curving groups of cross-hatching represent the clouds, *wulmu*.

The Ceremonial Object, Munan. The aborigines believe the curved clouds, *wulmu*, always rest on the head of *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man (Pl. 90D). These clouds are represented in the *dua* ceremonies by a boomerang-shaped piece of wood called the *munan*.

Plate 130G illustrates the obverse side of the *munan*. Reading from the right, panel *a* indicates new clouds forming after a thunderstorm, and panels *b*, *c* and *d*, clouds which are heavy with rain.

On the reverse side, Pl. 130H, reading from the right, the curving cross-hatched lines, *a*, symbolize the white tops of clouds, and the black rectangle, *b*, a dark-coloured nimbus cloud about to discharge its rain. On the next panel, *c*, the parallel longitudinal lines picture falling rain; the curving lines on the next panel, *d*, more clouds; and the parallel lines, *e*, spent thunder-clouds developing afresh.

The Yam, Bualku or Bawal. In the Yirrkalla myth, the fragments of the *burungunda* club, on entering the ground, are changed into a yam called *bualku*. In the *Tjambuwal* myth of Arnhem Bay (p. 289) the same yam is called *bawal*.

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[29] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 6A and p. 44, figure and describe this club as a yam.

[30] The myth, p. 284, relates that the stench of the decaying fish, ascending into the sky, creates more thunder-clouds.

[31] See also bark painting, Pl. 90B.

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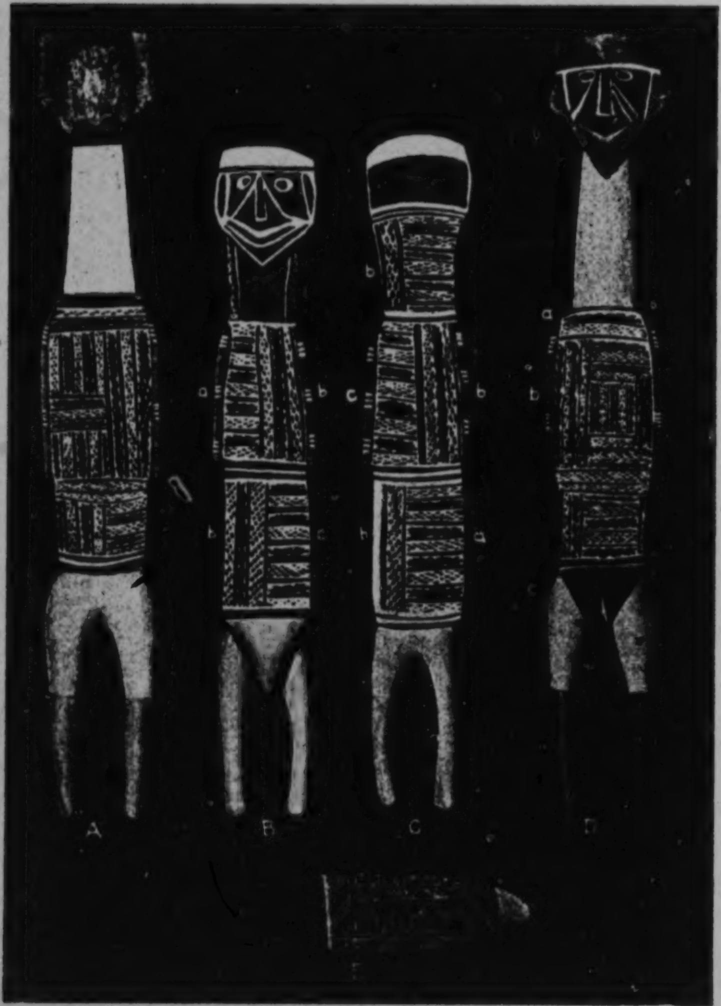

Joan Truran

PLATE 131. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, D The woman, Madalait B, C The man, Djunkgao E The yam, bualko

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

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Plate 131E illustrates the edible yam, *bualku* or *bawal*.[32] The cross-hatched panels, according to my informants, refer to the marks on the skin of the yam. It is likely, however, that they have a deeper meaning.

The Man, Djunkgao, the Woman, Madalait, and their Ceremonial Objects

I collected two carved and painted figures, one of *Djunkgao* and one of his sister, *Madalait*.[33] In addition, the aborigines made a number of objects belonging to the ceremonies of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*. They were: the music stick of *Djunkgao*; the music stick of *Madalait*; the digging stick of *Madalait*; a ceremonial object associated with the lizard, *tjunda*; the carved figure of the lizard, *tjunda*.

The Carved Figure of Djunkgao. Plate 131B, C illustrates the obverse and reverse sides of the figure of *Djunkgao*.[34]

On Pl. 131B the bands of cross-hatching at *a* represent *Djunkgao's* camp among the sand-hills at Jelangbara, a locality north of the entrance to Port Bradshaw, and those at *c*, the camp of his sister *Madalait*.[35] The parallel panels at *b* represent the soft sand which ran from under the feet of the brother and sister as they walked about among the drifting sand-hills.

On the reverse side of the figure (Pl. 131C) the meanings of the decorations are similar to those on the obverse. *Djunkgao's* camp is at *a*, and *Madalait's* at *c*. The designs at *b*, *b*, *b*, symbolize both the familiar running sand design and the parallel sand-hills at Jelangbara.

The Carved Figure of Madalait. Plate 131A, D illustrates the obverse and reverse side of the carved figure of *Madalait*.[36] The cross-hatched panels on the shoulders at *a*, Pl. 131D, have two meanings, the lighter coloured panels being the waves breaking on the shore at Bilapinja Island, and the darker panels, lines of seaweed in the water. Both the waves and the seaweed were the subject of a song by *Djunkgao*. The designs on the body at *b* represent the light on the crests of the waves which attracted the attention of *Djunkgao* at Bilapinja Island. The remainder of the painted decorations picture the marks of the dried salt-water on the body of *Madalait*.

The Music Stick of Djunkgao. Plate 132E, F illustrates the music stick[37] used by *Djunkgao* when, in the creation period, he performed a ceremony at Jelangbara, near Port Bradshaw.

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[32] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 6B, p. 43, describe a ceremonial object illustrating the *kauri* yam. This is possibly another representation of the *bualku* or *bawal* yam.

[33] Berndt (1952), p. 25, illustrates sketches which, he says, are copies of aboriginal drawings (not reproduced) showing Djanggawul (my *Djunkgao*) with a particularly long penis, and Miralaidj (my *Madalait*) with a greatly elongated clitoris. My carved figures of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*, Pl. 131A, B, C, D, do not show these characteristics.

[34] See p. 273 for complete myth.

[35] The aborigines pointed out that both on this figure and on the bark painting (Pl. 85E) the camps of the brother and sister were always some distance apart. In other words, they did not sleep together.

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[36] See p. 273 for complete myth.

[37] These music sticks were made and used in pairs. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl 1B, p. 46, describe and figure one relating to the goanna (probably the same as my lizard, *tjunda*).

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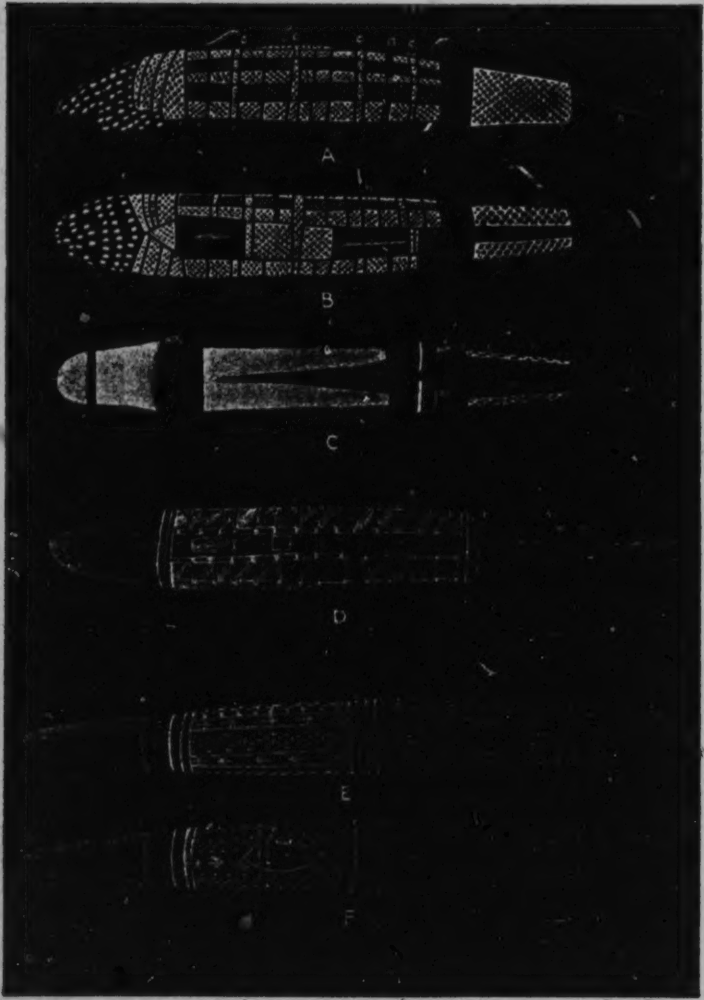

Jean Truran

PLATE 132. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B, C The shark, mana . D The mosquito—Milingimbi
E, F The music stick of Djunkgao

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

On the obverse side the lizard, *tjunda* (Pl. 132F), is pictured in the right-hand panel. In the left is a water-fowl, *buorta*, with its tracks. When *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* saw the water-bird feeding on the seeds of the swamp grass, they said: 'We will "sing" the bird, *buorta*, and the tracks that it makes in the mud, so that they will be our mark forever.' Since that day the bird and its tracks have belonged to the *Djunkgao* sacred objects. 773* 778 532*

The dots on either side of the bird are the grass-seeds it eats, and the cross-hatching, the leaves of that food plant.

The lizard occupies the right-hand panel on the reverse side of the music stick (Pl. 132E). In the left-hand panel, the dots are the seeds and the cross-hatched area, the leaves of the food plant of the bird, *buorta*. The tracks are those of the same bird.

The Music Stick of Madalait. Plate 133E, F pictures the music stick of the woman, *Madalait*.

On the obverse side (Pl. 133E) *tjunda*, the lizard, occupies the left-hand panel and his tracks, with the traditional pattern of the soft sand running down the hill, the right-hand panel.

On the reverse side (Pl. 133F) the lizard is in the right-hand panel, and in the left the mark in the sand made by *Djunkgao's* canoe when he pulled it up on the beach at Jelangbara. The short vertical lines indicate the breaking waves at the same place.

The Walking or Digging Stick of Djunkgao and his Sister. Plate 134C, D represents one of the walking or digging sticks of *Djunkgao* and his sister, *Madalait*, with which they made the sacred wells.[38]

In the centre of the obverse side (Pl. 134D) is the now familiar design of the lizard and the running sand. The long vertical line on the upper panel, *a*, symbolizes the mark made in the sand by *Djunkgao's* canoe as he pulled it up on the beach at Jelangbara.[39] The short transverse lines on either side of *a* are the waves breaking on the beach. The herring-bone designs on the lower panels on both sides of the digging stick are the leaves and branches of *murinji* trees (probably *Casuarina equisetifolia*) which now grow in the sand-hills at Port Bradshaw where *Djunkgao* and his sister pushed their digging sticks into the ground.[40]

The Ceremonial Object. Figure 68A, B illustrates both sides of a *dua* engraved ceremonial object belonging to the mythical man, *Djunkgao*, and the lizard, *tjunda*.

The design on the panel *a* of A pictures the tracks of the lizard on the side of the sand-hill, and the parallel lines on panel *b*, the series of sand-hills which *Djunkgao* 'sang' at Port Bradshaw.[41]

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[38] Berndt (1952), p. 1, states that the walking stick of *Djunkgao* is a symbolic penis. When describing the walking stick (Pl. 134C, D) to me, the aborigines did not state that it was associated in any way with the male sex organ. [114]

[39] Myth, p. 273.

[40] This is possibly the same as the stick, *mauwulan*, carried by the sun-woman during her journey across the sky, p. 273.

[41] Myth, p. 273.

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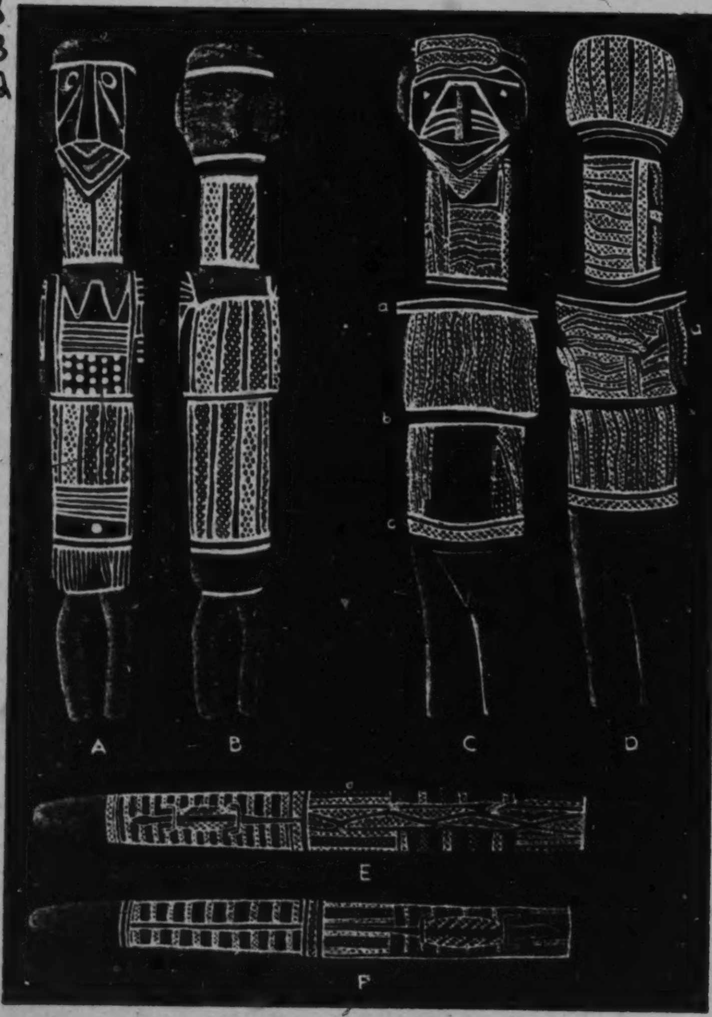

PLATE 133. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B The woman, Bunbulama C, D The woman, Malwulwi
E, F The music stick of Madalait

On the reverse side, B, the designs *c* and *d* symbolize the lines of light on the crest of the waves and the mark made in the wet sand by the bottom of the canoe as *Djunkgao* pulled it up on the beach at Jelangbara.

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The Lizard, Tjunda. Plate 134B is a *dua* carved figure of the lizard, *tjunda*, seen by *Djunkgao* and his sister, *Madalait*, at Jelangbara, north of Port Bradshaw.[42] The cross-hatched parallel panels on the neck and the shoulders are the parallel sand-hills 'sung' by *Djunkgao* at Jelangbara; the zigzag line, the track of the lizard; and the groups of transverse lines on either side, the loose sand running from under its feet as it walked along the crest of a sand-hill.

The Man, Banaitja, or Laitjun

While *Banaitja* was resting on the bottom of the Duluruwaltjalapa swamp, after he had been speared by the aborigines of Blue Mud Bay, he painted designs on every part of his body.[43] Later, when he rose from the water in the form of *Laitjun*, he decreed that these designs should belong to the individual *jiritja matas* (language groups) of north-eastern Arnhem Land.[44] Some of these *mata* designs are painted on the carved figure of *Laitjun*.

Plate 135A, B illustrates the carved and painted figure of *Laitjun*, the transformed *Banaitja*, whose body is covered with the *jiritja mata* designs mentioned in the myth. He is wearing feather ornaments on his beard and arms, and is carrying, in his right hand, the bark bundle[45] (later called *laitjuit* or *banaitja*) with which he beat the ground to call the aborigines together. *Laitjun* is shown with a sub-incised penis.[46] Although the decorations on the head and face of the carved figure of *Laitjun* have no ceremonial meaning, those on the front, back and legs represent some, but not all, of the various *jiritja matas* (language groups) of north-eastern Arnhem Land.

a, belonging to the *dalwongu mata* of Blue Mud Bay, refers to hives of wild bees which flew from the Matamatani swamps, at Blue Mud Bay, to Milingimbi, so that they would not be destroyed by a bush-fire.[47]

b, a design similar to that of the *dalwongu*, belongs to the *manaitja mata* of Blue Mud Bay.[48] It refers to totemic honey and honeycomb in unidentified swamps at Blue Mud Bay.

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[42] Myth, p. 2[illegible].

[43] For complete myth, see p. 279.

[44] For description of language groups, *matas*, and clan groups, *malas*, see p. 106.

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[45] This is similar to the *alukwia* bark bundle used in the *arawaltja* ceremonies of Groote Eylandt, Pl. 16C. Warner (1937), p. 502, calls similar bark bundles *banitja*.

[46] As mentioned previously, p. 279, this would suggest that the myth of *Banaitja* or *Laitjun* originated in an area where sub-incision was practised.

[47] Bark painting, Pl. 93B. Warner (1937), p. 13, lists wild bees, among other totems, as belonging to the *dalwongu* language group. Berndt (1948), p. 316, states that the design refers to a fresh-water weed. Later, Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23, correct this and refer to the *dalwongu* as a *mala* associated with the *wonba* bird.

[48] Bark painting, Pl. 121D; also a painted *jiritja* skull, Pl. 101B, C. Berndt (1948), p. 318, gives as its meaning, bees and honeycomb. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23, list *manaitja* as a *mala* (clan) group instead of a *mata* (language) group. This may be correct, for when asking the aborigines to which *mata* they belonged, they sometimes gave the name of their *mala*. Our knowledge of the *mata* and the *mala* is incomplete and confused.

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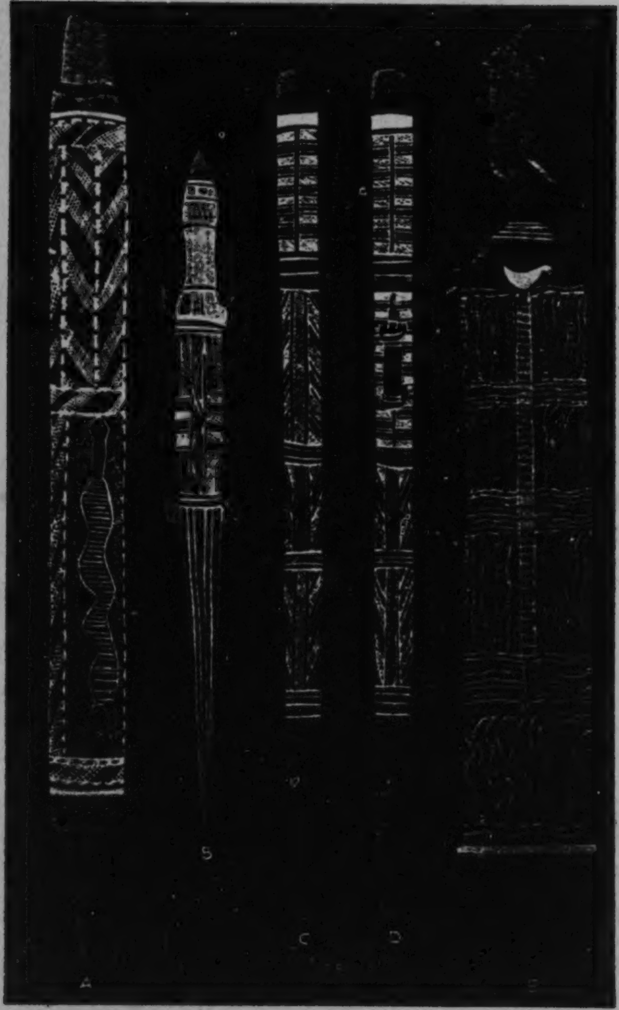

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PLATE 134. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla and Milingimbi

A The serpent, wunungu B The lizard, tjunda
C, D The walking stick of Djunkgao and Madalait E The night-bird, karawak

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

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The fact that designs *a* and *b* are similar in appearance and linked in the myths suggests that the two *matas* are closely associated.

c, a cross-hatched panel of the *lamuriri mata* of Cape Arnhem, represents a reef in the sea.

d, a cross-hatched panel between *c* and *e*, represents the open sea (locality unknown). It belongs to the *maku-uuulmer mata*.

e, a cross-hatched panel belonging to the *malakun mata*, represents the salt-water side of a totemic place at Blue Mud Bay.

Designs *c*, *d* and *e* are not listed by any previous investigator, nor are they present on any of the bark paintings. This, coupled with the fact that the artist could not provide additional data about them, would suggest that the information is incomplete and should be accepted with reserve.

f, a series of lozenge-shaped designs, belongs to the *mangalili mata* of Blue Mud Bay.[49] It represents the flower, leaf and bulb of an unidentified water-lily, *jouku*.

g, almost identical to the *mangalili* design, belongs to the *wonguri mata* of Blue Mud Bay. It also represents the water-lily bulb, *jouku*.[50]

h, a line of lozenge-shaped designs on the left leg, belonging to the *madarlpa mata* of Blue Mud Bay, pictures the toredo worm, *milka*, at Blue Mud Bay.[51] The design of the *madarlpa mata* is similar to that used in the fire symbols in the bark painting of the bandicoot, Pl. 116B.

j, on the right leg, belongs to the *gumaitj mata* of Caledon Bay and is associated with the myth of the crocodile, *baron*, the bird, *djiriku*, fire and paper-bark trees.[52]

k, the upper design on the back of *Laitjun*, belongs to an unidentified *mata*, *baijnijur*, near Milingimbi. It represents a hive of wild honey.

m, the lower design, belongs to *jerkurunga* (Warner's Yaernungo) *mata* of the Wessel Islands.[53]

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[49] This design, bearing the same meaning, was used on the body painting of a *jiritja* youth who underwent circumcision at Yirrkalla (Pl. 129C). It is also engraved on a smoking pipe, Fig. 50C. Berndt (1948), p. 318, lists the design as *mangalilji*, meaning a log under water. Later, Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23, correct this statement and list the *mangalilji* as a *mata* associated with the *laitjlaitj* parrot. Warner does not mention this language group.

[50] Warner (1937), p. 42, lists the *wanguri* language group, *mata*, as north of Caledon Bay, but his totems do not include the water-lily. Berndt (1948), p. 318, records that the *wonguri* design refers to the toredo worm, while later, with Elkin (1950), p. 23, they list *wonguri* as a *mata* design referring to a *laitjlaitj* parrot.

[51] Warner (1937), p. 40, lists the *murderpa* as a clan in the Blue Mud Bay area, not a language group. Its important high totems are crocodile and fire. Berndt (1948), p. 318, records that the *madarlpa* design refers to fire or ashes inside seaweed and mud. Later, in collaboration with Elkin (1950), p. 23, however, he lists it as the *manarlpa mata* which, they say, refers to the *wauba* bird.

[52] This *gumaitj* design is used on a bark painting of the crocodile, Pl. 119B; of the bush fire and paper-bark trees, Pl. 95B; on the engraved pipe of the crocodile, Fig. 50C; and on a body painting, Pl. 129C. Warner (1937), p. 42, lists the *komaits* (*gumaitj*) *mata* of Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem. This is no doubt a section of the Caledon Bay *mata*. Berndt (1948), p. 318, records *gumaitj* designs, some of which relate to fire and honey, and the others to paper bark. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23, alter this and state that the *gumaitj mata* means the east wind.

[53] Warner (1937), p. 47, records the totems of the *yaernungo mata*. I did not gather any information on the subject.

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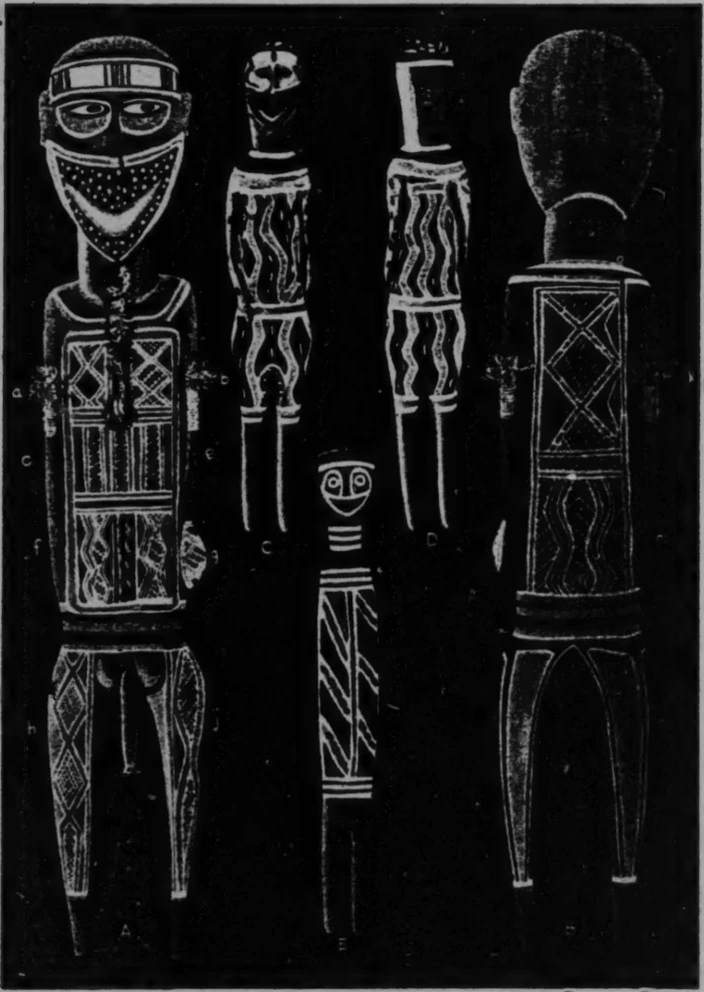

PLATE 155. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla *Rosemary Dunnett*

A. B The man, Laitjun or Banaitja C, D The woman, Wurati-laku
E The Mokoi, Wulu-wulu

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

Staff Associated with the Laitjun and Banaitja Ceremonies. This (Pl. 136A, C) is used in some unidentified manner in the *Laitjun-Banaitja* ceremonies belonging to a totemic stream, Duluru-apwa, near Blue Mud Bay. The designs on both sides of the staff have a similar meaning. 532* 773* 778

At *a*, Pl. 136A, is a *jiritja tinimbu* fish. Above its head is a rain-cloud created by the fish, and to the left, a totemic rock also associated with the same creature.

The central line in panel *b* is a watercourse at Duluru-apwa, and the transverse cross-hatched panels, the grass growing along its banks.

Panel *c* refers to water-lilies, *jouku*, which grow in the swamp at *d*. In panel *e* are more water-lilies.[54]

The Woman, Bunbulama

Plate 133A, B depicts the obverse and reverse sides of a carved figure of a mythical woman, *Bunbulama*,[55] who, with her brother, *Wuluwait*, is associated with rain-making.[56] 532* 773*

The cap on the head of the figure, Pl. 133A, represents the swamp-grass which, in place of hair, grows on the scalp of *Bunbulama*. The double triangles below the shoulders are the breasts, and the transverse parallel lines below them the body scars used as decoration by both men and women. The series of white dots across the upper part of the abdomen symbolize storm-clouds and the vertical cross-hatched panels, below, rain falling from them. The navel is shown as a white dot and the pubic hairs as a series of vertical parallel lines immediately below. The vertical panels on the reverse side, Pl. 133B, symbolize falling rain.

The Woman, Malwulwi

Plate 133C, D represents the ancestral woman, *Malwulwi*, who during creation times was drowned near Blue Mud Bay.[57] The wavy cross-hatched panels over her body and neck symbolize the high tide that overcame her, and the bands across the shoulders, abdomen and hips, the marks made by the water on the totemic tree (the transformed body of *Malwulwi*) at different seasons of the year. Her distended abdomen, due to pregnancy, is indicated by the black rectangle in the front. *Malwulwi*'s dog, the little rat, *nik-nik*, is shown at *a*, near the right shoulder blade on the back of the figure, Pl. 121A.

The Woman, Muralunaugau, of Bremer Island

The *dua* woman, *Muralunaugau*, was expert in finding the edible yam, *maulka*. One day, feeling lonely, she picked some of the *maulka* flowers, placed them in her hair, painted her face white and, visiting another woman, *Bunbulama* (Pl. 133A, B), who lived near by, asked her to join in a dance. To this *Bunbulama* readily agreed, she in turn decorating herself with the blossoms of

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[54] This design is the same as that of the *mangalili mata* of Blue Mud Bay, Fig. 61K.

[55] See also bark painting, Pl. 91C, and bark figure, Pl. [illegible], D.

[56] Warner (1937), p. 218, describes a method of rain-making which resembles that used by the aborigines of Yirrkalla.

[57] Myth, p. 431.

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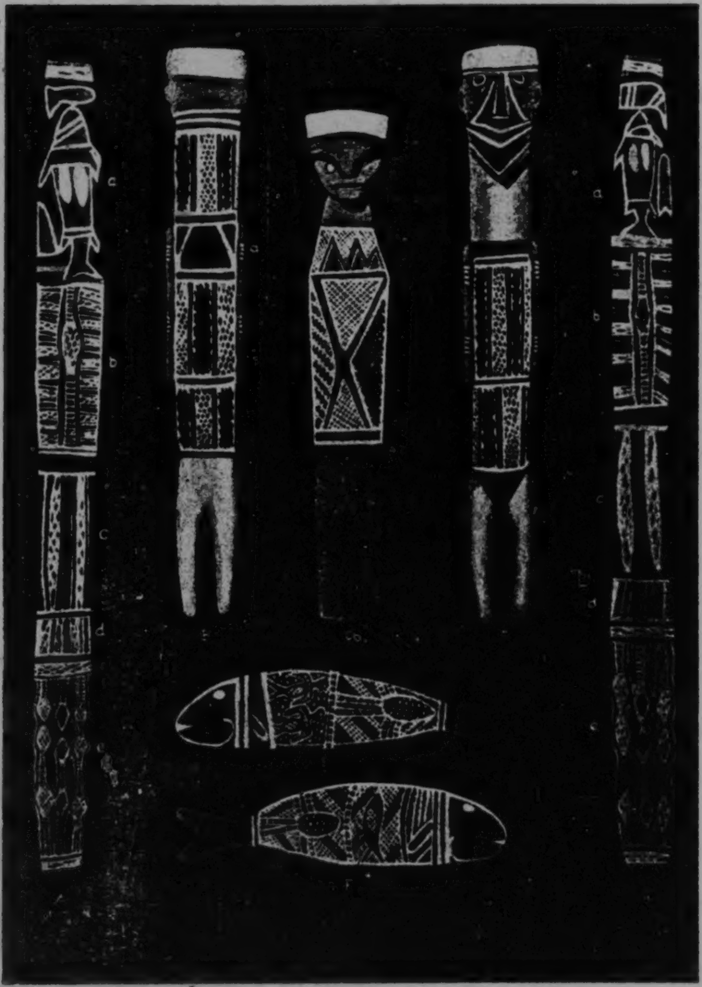

PLATE 136. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A. G A staff, Banaitja ceremonies B. D The woman, Muralunangau
C The man, Wurumu E, F, The fish, naruwilja

another yam, *banumin*. But each woman became so engrossed in her own dance 532* that she forgot about the other, and travelled in a different direction from that 773* of her companion. *Bunbulama* finished her dance at Melville Bay where, in company with her husband, *Waluwait*,[58] they now entertain the spirits of *dua* dead whilst they are on their way to Purelko.[59] *Muralunangau*, on the other hand, danced her way to Bremer Island. But when *Muralunangau* was making camp she noticed the flowers with which she had decorated herself had all wilted. She became so sad and wept so violently that the sound of her grief caused the *timaru* wind to blow.[60]

At the present time, when the rainy season is nearing its end the women in 789 the camp wail in unison, believing that the sound of their grief, like that of 821 *Muralunangau*, will cause the wet-season wind, *bara*, to stop and the *timaru* wind to blow.[61]

The white cap on the head of *Muralunangau*, Pl. 136B, D, indicates the paint used when she decorated herself in readiness for her dance with *Bunbulama*. The yellow face on Pl. 136D is symbolic of the colour of the totemic clay-pan of the woman at Bremer Island. The black rectangle at *a*, Pl. 136B, is *Muralunangau's* carrying-bag. The cross-hatched panels on *Muralunangau's* body indicate falling rain.[62]

The Winds of Yirrkalla. *Bara* is a north-westerly *dua* wind which continues 132 throughout the rainy season, extending from November to March. This is a 262 time of scarcity for the aborigines, because the continuous rains, high humidity and heavy storms not only spoil most of the food, but prevent fishing.

Timaru, another *dua* wind, blows from the east-south-east and immediately succeeds the *bara*. The plants start to bear fruit and the underground tubers to mature during the period of this wind. The mythical woman, *Muralunangau*, 773* of Bremer Island was responsible for the first *timaru* wind.[63] As mentioned 789 previously, the aboriginal women endeavour to start the *timaru* wind by means of concerted wailing.

The *jiritja* wind, *lunguruma*, which blows from a northerly direction, is sent 776 to the aborigines of Yirrkalla by the spirits of the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuma. *Lunguruma* brings many coco-nuts, lengths of bamboo and sometimes even Melanesian canoes;[64] all of these are looked upon by the Yirrkalla aborigines as gifts from the spirits of Nalkuma.[65] Food is plentiful during the period of this wind.

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[58] See myth associated with bark figure of *Bunbulama*, Pl. 65C, D.

[59] See myth, journey of *dua* dead, p. 325.

[60] See details of Groote Eylandt winds, p. 91.

[61] The *timaru* is the wind following the wet season, a time of scarcity. It ushers in a period when the fruits start to ripen and the underground tubers mature.

[62] As there is no mention of rain in the myth of *Muralunangau* it is not clear why these designs are painted on her body.

[63] See myth of woman, *Muralunangau*, p. 433.

[64] See carved pipe, p. 288.

[65] Berndt (1948), p. 91, mentions that 'at the time of the north-east winds [no doubt *lunguruma*], just after the wet monsoonal season, coco-nuts, cones, long pods, bread fruit and timber, with an occasional canoe (including some of the outrigger variety) are washed up on the mainland beaches and are said to have been sent by the spirits that inhabit Badu.' Berndt's Badu is my Nalkuma.

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Mamarika[66] (*jiritja*), from the south-east, the major wind of the dry season, is not, during its early stages, a time of plenty. Towards its close, however, the cycad fruit, *natu*, ripens and provides the aborigines with ample food.

Following the *mamarika* is the *tjeleton*, a *jiritja* wind of short duration which blows first from the north-east, changing to the north-westerly *bara*. The cycad fruit is plentiful during this period.

Several other winds of short duration are recognized by the men of Yirrkalla—*djala* (southerly), *jauara* (south-west), and *ritain* (south-south-west). It is surprising that many of these winds were not mentioned by the Groote Eylandters.

Female Figure, Unidentified

*532 Plate 137C, D is a carved wooden figure similar in form to that of the pregnant woman, *Malwulwi* (Pl. 133C, D). I did not collect either the symbolism of the designs or the associated myth.

The Man, Naruwilja

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During *bumun* (creation) times there lived at Biobajini, on the Wessel Islands, a fair-skinned *jiritja* man, *Naruwilja*. Not being satisfied with this human existence, he transformed himself into a fish, still bearing the name of *naruwilja*. But as that did not please him he tried the life of an octopus, *mainda*, only to find as little satisfaction in that condition. Finally he changed himself into a flying fox, *matur*, and has remained in that form ever since.

[825] The locality in which the flying foxes live at the Wessel Islands is forbidden to all. Should anyone trespass on their nesting place, and in particular kill a flying fox, the spirit of the creature will change itself into an octopus, enter the body of the miscreant, wrap its tentacles around his heart and kill him.[67]

Plate 136E, F is the carved and painted figure of the transformed man *Naruwilja*. In the right-hand panel of Pl. 136E is the octopus, *mainda*, and in the left, two flying foxes, *matur*. The fish, *naruwilja*, occupies the right-hand panel of Pl. 136F and the octopus, *mainda*, the left-hand panel.

The Macassan Woman, Jubara

*532 Plate 137A, B is the wooden figure of a woman, *Jubara*, who, many years ago, befriended an old aboriginal, *Amalatja*, when he was taken by trepangers to a Macassan village called Jumaina.[68] This figure is the work of *Mungeraui*, the son of *Amalatja*.

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[66] See Groote Eylandt myths of *bara* (north-west) and *mamarigu* (south-east) winds, p. 94.

[262] [67] Although I did not obtain the specific information, it is likely that this myth is told to the younger men so that they will not eat the flesh of the flying fox which, in many parts of the Northern Territory, is regarded by the aborigines as 'old man tucker'. There are numerous references to the food prohibitions of the young men in the myths of the Liverpool River area.

[68] See description of a Yirrkalla painting of Macassan women weaving, by the same artist, Pl. 93A. The Berndts (1949), p. 213, describe a number of non-sacred carved figures of Macassan and *Baijini* people, most of which had been carved by *Mungeraui*. Their figure on Pl. 2, Fig. 3, is wearing a similar decoration to *Jubara*.

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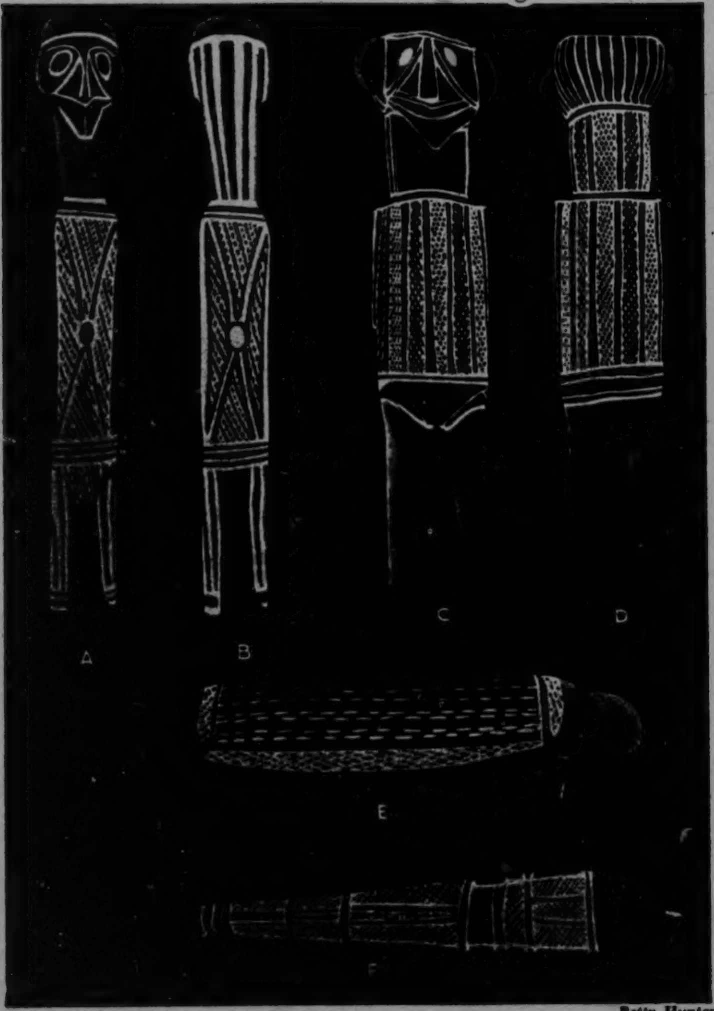

Betty Hunter

PLATE 137. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B The Macassan woman
E The echidna, tjiramuna

C, D Woman, unidentified
F Shark, unidentified

*532 [915] The cross-hatching on the back and front of the figure indicates the tunic worn by the woman and the pattern on the legs, the stripes on her short trousers. The central disc is a money bag, held in place by the diagonal strings. The artist has indicated *Jubara's* long hair by a series of vertical lines.

The Wuruma Man

764 *532 [616] Plate 136C illustrates a mortuary post, called *wuruma*, which, according to my informants, is similar to those the visiting Macassan trepangers placed on the graves of their dead.[69] Until recently men of the *jiritja* moiety placed similar posts on the graves of their dead. Both Warner and the Berndts[70] describe some of the customs associated with their use.

The Woman, Wurati-laku

*532 *773 A mythical woman, *Wurati-laku*, who once lived on the Amakula River, Groote Eylandt,[71] became dissatisfied with her surroundings and started on a journey round the island. She camped at many places, at the Angoroko River, at Amalipa, at north-western Groote Eylandt, at Wangu-garipa, near Umbakumba, at Algirita, Lake Hubert, making her final camp at Natira, near Central Hill. Each of her camps became extensive outcrops of rocky boulders. *Wurati-laku*, afraid lest men other than her husband might see her, always ran away on their approach, covering herself with a sheet of bark. Until recently the women of Groote Eylandt copied the actions of the mythical woman, *Wurati-laku*. Whenever a strange man approached the camp they ran away, holding around their bodies sheets of hinged bark, called *inukumba*.[72]

Plate 135C, D illustrates the carved figure of *Wurati-laku*, the designs on the body representing those painted on the hinged sheet of bark, *inukumba*, which she always carried. The dots on her head represent the flower, *latulat*, she placed in her hair.

The Spirit Woman, Wulu-wulu

776 *532 [775] A number of these spirit women, or *Mokoi*, *Wulu-wulu*, live with a male *Mokoi*, *Kaltana*, in the Gurila jungle, near Port Bradshaw. The *Wulu-wulu* assist the spirits of the *jiritja* dead on their journey to the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuma,[73] by giving them as a passport the bean of a *menin* vine.

The central line on the carved figure of *Wulu-wulu*, Pl. 135E, is the trunk of the *menin* vine, the diagonals, the branches, and the ovals within the diagonals, the bean, *gurung-guru*,[74] which *Wulu-wulu* gives to the travelling spirits of the dead.

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[69] See origin of carved figures, p. 416.

[70] Warner (1937), p. 434; Berndts (1949), p. 216.

[71] See map, Fig. 4.

[72] Tindale (1925), p. 71, mentions the strict seclusion of the aboriginal women at Groote Eylandt.

[73] Bark painting, Pl. 100B.

[74] Pl. 100A.

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

The Wawalik Sisters

In the fragment of the *wawalik* ceremonies[75] which we witnessed at Yirrkalla the aborigines used two ceremonial poles. One, Pl. 138B, represents the elder sister whose blood, after she had given birth to a child, offended the serpent, *jurlungur*, which lived in the well, Mirrirmina; the other, Pl. 138A, represents the younger sister.[76] 778 773* 532*

The Ceremonial Poles. Plate 138B is the complete design on the sacred pole belonging to the elder *Wawalik* sister. The strip of frayed bark on top is her hair and the curving designs, the blood caused by the birth of her child.

Plate 138A belongs to the younger *Wawalik* sister. The lower triangular designs picture the water in the sacred well of *jurlungur*, the serpent. The parallel vertical lines in the upper portion indicate the water flowing into the well.

2. CEREMONIAL OBJECTS FROM NORTH-EASTERN ARNHEM LAND

The Fresh-water Tortoise, Mimala

This bull-roarer, shaped like a paddle, belongs to Diawirinja, west of Arnhem Bay, the totem place of the fresh-water tortoise, *Mimala*. The bull-roarer is so sacred that even its sound must not be heard by the women. 778 [562 534]

During a burial ceremony at Diawirinja in creation time the fresh-water tortoise, *Mimala*, then a man, made four bull-roarers, similar to the one illustrated, and buried them in those parts of the ceremonial ground over which everyone would dance. Though the women were assisting in the burial rituals, they, of course, were unaware of the sacred objects under their feet. At the conclusion of the rituals *Mimala* hunted the women away, dug the bull-roarers out of the sand and threw them into a nearby waterhole, where they have since been transformed into four large trees. Similar bull-roarers, after they have been used in the present-day *mimala* ceremonies of Diawirinja, are thrown into a sacred waterhole forbidden to the women. Being made of hard, durable wood, it is only necessary, the following year, to take the bull-roarers from the water and re-decorate them.[77] 779* 778 764

Plate 144A, B is the obverse and reverse sides of the bull-roarer. The tortoise is shown in panel *a* on B, surrounded by dots indicating the bamboos growing in his totemic swamp. In panel *c* is *Mimala* again, accompanied by an unidentified diving bird with which he is linked in the myth. 532* 778

Panel *b* on B, and *d*, *e* and *f* on A all picture hives of wild honey, the dots being the bees and the cross-hatched diamonds the honey. The transverse bars, *x*, *x*, *x*, on A and B symbolize the sacred waterhole into which the bull-roarers are thrown at the completion of the *mimala* ceremonies. [196]

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[75] For more complete myth, see p. 275.

[76] Bark painting, Pl. 88A.

[77] These and similar sacred objects last for several years under water. If buried in the ground, they would soon be destroyed by termites.

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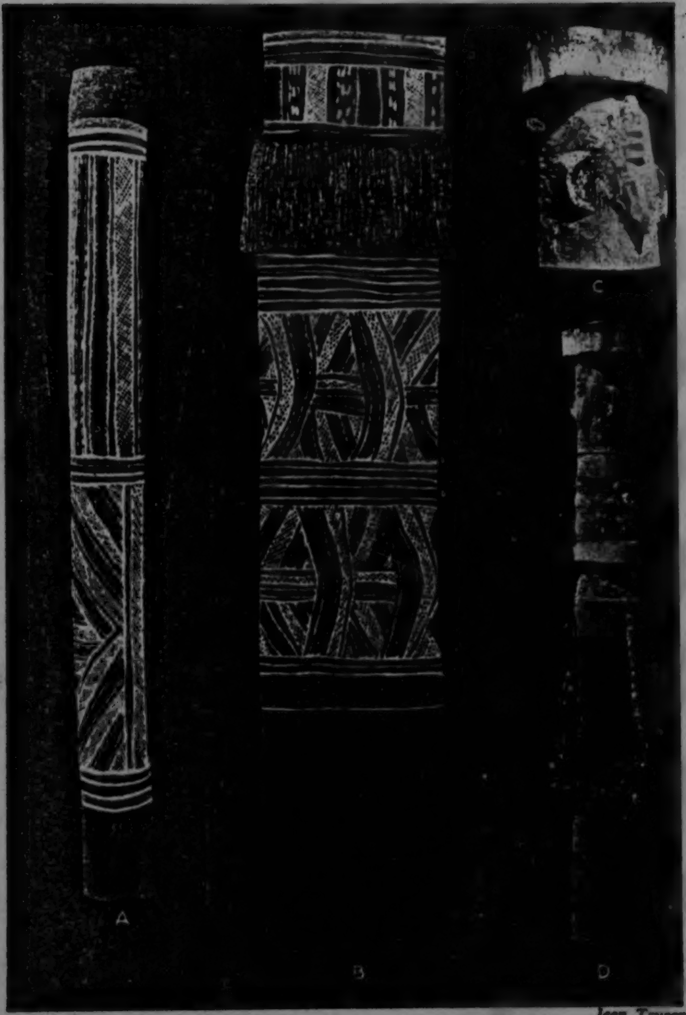

Jean Truran

PLATE 138. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A The younger Wawalik sister
B The elder Wawalik sister
C Head of the Chaseling figure
D The Chaseling figure

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

The Mosquito Sacred Object

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Plate 132D is a sacred object of the mosquito totem of Milingimbi. It belongs to the *dua narra* ceremonies. Collected by F. M. Setzler. 778

3. CARVED AND PAINTED HUMAN HEADS

The Two Brothers, Bauaramin and Wururunga

The two brothers, *Bauaramin*[78] and *Wururunga*, set out to kill their enemy, *Djunmundia*, who had previously murdered their father.[79] 628 532+

Plate 139D, E, A, H illustrates the carved heads of the two brothers, *Bauaramin* and *Wururunga*. 773*

The designs on the face of *Bauaramin*, Pl. 139D, E, and the white line down the nose, which represents the deadly tiger-snake, *dunbania*, are always painted on the face of the aborigines when they are setting out on an avenging expedition. They are known as the 'death-marks'.[80] The darker cross-hatched panels on the side of the head, Pl. 139D, indicate the base of the thunder-clouds, and the lighter coloured ones, their white tops. 302

The white dots on the face of *Wururunga*, Pl. 139H, are hail-stones, *milarik*, and the hole at the base of the nose, an attempt to represent a skull, for *Wururunga* has long since been dead.

On the side of the head of *Wururunga*, Pl. 139A, the darker cross-hatched panel represents falling rain, and the lighter coloured ones a hail-storm. The white dots on the side of the head also indicate hail-stones. When these hail-stones fall to the ground in *dua* territory they are sometimes transformed into white stones, *milarik*.[81] The dots on the neck are falling rain, and the white cap, the tops of cumulus clouds.

The Spirit Man, Duwuliana

This *dua Mokoi*, *Duwuliana*, lives in a forest at Arnhem Bay. As his only food is the honey of the wild bees, he carries only a honey basket.[82] 776 260

At the beginning of the dry season the basket is clean, having been well washed by the heavy storms of the wet season. As the dry season advances the basket becomes progressively darker in colour, due to the accumulated honey and dirt, for *Duwuliana* is a careless fellow who never washes his honey basket, knowing that the next wet season will save him the trouble. At the beginning of the dry season the honey in the hives in the trees is a golden-yellow in colour, but it gradually darkens and becomes less pleasant to eat as the season advances. The aborigines blame *Duwuliana* for this change, claiming that if he were more cleanly and washed his basket regularly they would always have clear golden honey.

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[78] In the myth of the bark painting, Pl. 98A, *Bauaramin* is called *Tjuna-tjuna*.

[79] See myth of *Tjuna-tjuna* and *Wururunga*, p. 303.

[80] See myth, p. 305.

[81] See the white stones, *milarik*, at the totem place of the thunder-man at Jalboa, Pl. 91F. 285

[82] A tightly woven basket which will hold honey. 415

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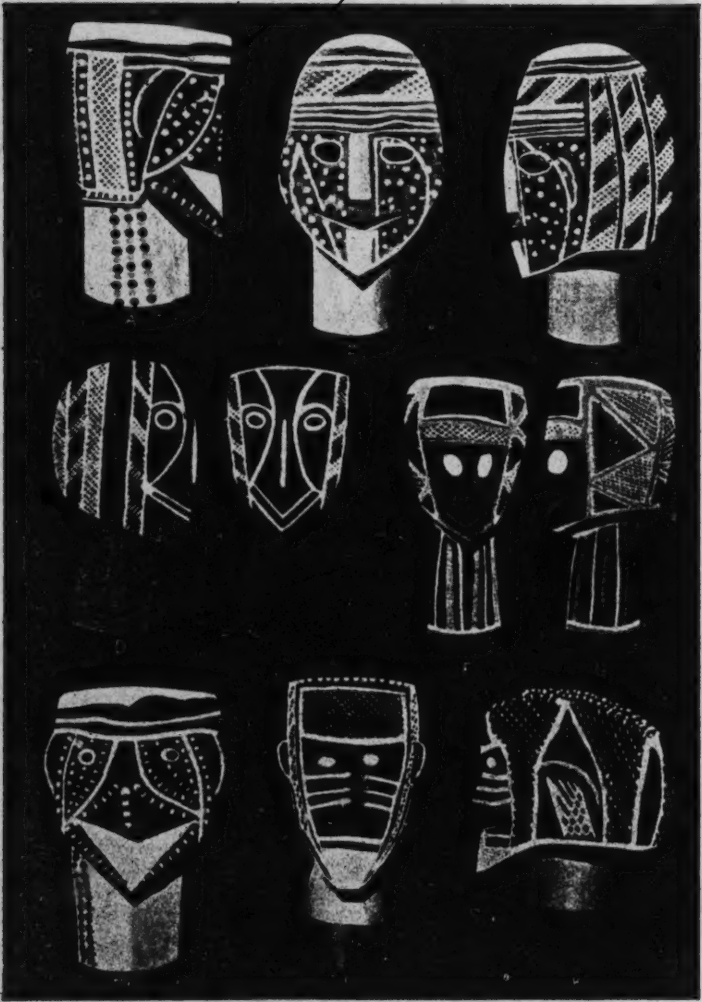

Plate 139. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, H The man, Wururunga B, C The man, Duwuliana D, E The man, Bauaramin
F, G The Baijini, Tankupou J, K The Mokoi, Jindjaraui

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

The designs on the head of *Duwuliana*, Pl. 139B, C, all refer to rain, hail and thunder-clouds. The dots on the face of B are hail-stones, and the cross-hatched panel across the forehead, small clouds. On the side of the head, Pl. 139C, the cross-hatched panels indicate falling rain, and the white crown, the tops of cumulus clouds. 532* 776 778

The Baijini Man, Tankupou

Plate 139F, G pictures the carved head of a *Baijini* man, *Tankupou*, who once lived at Port Bradshaw.[83] The black rectangle on the forehead, Pl. 139F, is the pillow of *Tankupou*, and the cross-hatched panel beneath, the pillow-slip. The designs on Pl. 139G all refer to the cotton goods owned by the *Baijini*, and the vertical lines on the neck to the posts of the *Baijini* house. 177 773* 532*

The Baijini Man, Gurumuluna

Gurumuluna was the head man of the *Baijini* visitors to Port Bradshaw. He is now included in the pantheon of mythical beings who created the topography of Port Bradshaw. [776]

Plate 140A, B, C pictures the carved head of *Gurumuluna*. The designs on the forehead, Pl. 140B, indicate a distinguishing badge which, according to my informants, is similar to that worn by a ship's captain. The two triangles in front of the ear, Pl. 140C, are the cotton sheets for *Gurumuluna's* bed, and the cross-hatched rectangle in the same position on Pl. 140A, his pillow. The cross-hatched triangles on the top of the head and behind the ears represent the roof of the house of the *Baijini*, which was constructed of bamboo rafters and palm-tree thatch. The parallel vertical lines on the neck refer to the upright posts of the house.

The Spirit Man, Jindjaraui 532*

The spirit man, *Jindjaraui*, lives on the shores of a swamp west of Arnhem Bay. This *Mokoi* carries a long steel knife in his hair which, when he strikes it, gives off a clear bell-like note. This sound guides the *jiritja* spirits of the dead belonging to the Arnhem Bay area to *Jindjaraui's* camp, one of the *jiritja* 'heavens'.[84] 773* 776 [775]

Plate 139J, K illustrates the carved head of the *Mokoi*, *Jindjaraui*. The dark-coloured triangle above the ear on Pl. 139K is the blade of the steel knife the *Mokoi* carries in his hair and the cross-hatched rectangle below, its handle. The cross-hatching on either side of the knife indicates clouds and the dots on the top

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[83] For more complete details of the *Baijini* myth, see p. 333.

[84] Berndt (1948), p. 94, claims that the spirits of the *jiritja* dead from Yirrkalla go to Badu (Mulgrave Island) in the Torres Straits. He, however, refers to fifteen other names for the *jiritja* heaven. Although my *jiritja* informants from Yirrkalla stated emphatically that their spirits went to Nalkuma (p. 331), not to Badu, and I did not obtain such a large number of designations for the *jiritja* home of the dead as did Berndt, the myth associated with *Jindjaraui* indicates that there is more than one *jiritja* heaven. The *dua* moiety at Yirrkalla, on the other hand, refer to only one heaven, i.e. Purelko (myth, p. 325), although the *dua* moiety of Milingimbi call their land of the dead Djirata. [114 775]

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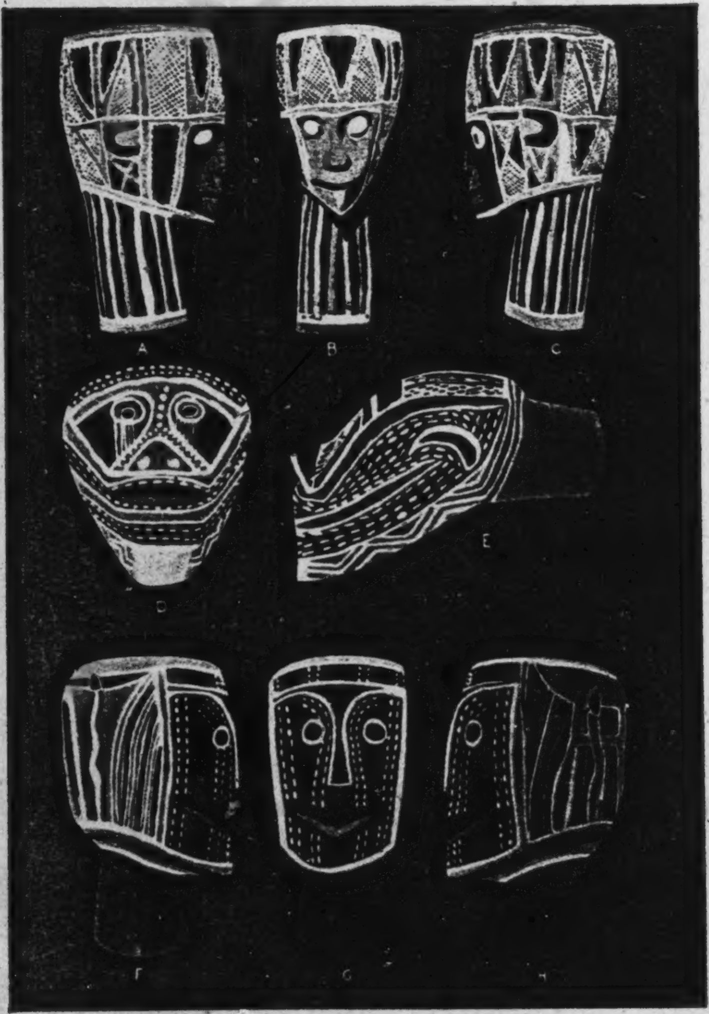

PLATE 140. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla
A, B C The Baijini, Gurumuluna D, E The woman, Urapali
F, G, H The Mokoi, Wulu-wulu

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of the head, falling rain. The cross-hatched band across the forehead on Pl. 139J 773*
depicts the falling rain running down the face of the *Mokoi.* 776

The Spirit Woman, Urapali

There is a spirit woman, or *Mokoi*, called *Urapali*, at Blue Mud Bay who, 776
when she took part in a burial ceremony, stabbed herself on the face and head 764
with a sharpened bone in the same manner as do aboriginal women today on 532*
the death of one of their near relatives. *Urapali* still carries the marks both of the wounds and the blood which flowed from them.

Plate 140D, E illustrates the carved head of *Urapali.* On Pl. 140D the two groups of parallel lines under the eyes are tears she shed in her grief and the dots across the forehead and on the face, the self-inflicted wounds.

On Pl. 140E the white dots on the top of the head and along the side of the face indicate the places where *Urapali* wounded herself, and the meandering line along the lower jaw, the blood which flowed from those wounds.

The Spirit Man, Wulu-wulu

The spirit man, *Wulu-wulu*,[85] a *Mokoi* with a particularly dark skin, is 776
associated in some undetermined manner with the *bilumbira* serpent of Cape 532*
Arnhem.

Plate 140F, G, H illustrates the carved head of *Wulu-wulu.*

On Pl. 140G the white dots on the dark face of the *Mokoi* represent falling rain. The serpent, *bilumbira*, occupies the central position on Pl. 140F. The dark crescent at *bilumbira's* head indicates cirrus clouds; the light ground behind, the cumulus cloud in which the serpent travels; and the curving parallel lines on either side, falling rain.

On the opposite side of the head, Pl. 140H, is the serpent with its head in a cirrus cloud. The dark-coloured square immediately below the cloud is the totemic place at Cape Arnhem, where *bilumbira* lives in the trees.[86] The curving parallel lines in this panel indicate falling rain.

4. HUMAN FIGURES IN BARK

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The aborigines at Yirrkalla make simple human figures by binding the soft bark of the paper-bark tree with string.[87] These bark figures are exhibited in some non-secret ceremonies, such as those of the *dua* spirit people (*Mokoi*).

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[85] It is possible that a fuller investigation would reveal the existence of *Wulu-wulu* men and women in a number of *jiritja* localities around Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw. See myth of *Wulu-wulu* women, p. 343, also bark painting, Pl. 109A.

[86] Myth, p. 351.

[87] Kaudern (1944), p. 300, records similar bark figures made by the natives of the Celebes to represent themselves and thus confuse the evil spirits. Worms (1942), Fig. 6, illustrates a similar bark figure associated with the Goranara ceremonies of north-western Australia. [171]

*532 [764] *Bunbulama* and her brother, *Wuluwait*. Bark figures are also used in the burial ceremonies, where they are used to represent children. They are placed beside the corpse so that it will not be lonely.

*532 778 *773 The figures of *Bunbulama* and *Wuluwait* have leaves and rushes stuck in the head for hair. In the bark painting, Pl. 94C, these represent the swamp grass in the rain-making bundles. Except for this, all the bark figures in my collection were similar in appearance. For that reason the figures of *Bunbulama* and *Wuluwait* only are illustrated.

The myths associated with the bark painting, Pl. 94C, the carved figure, Pl. 133A, B, and the bark figures, Fig. 65C, D, suggest that the myth of the *Mokoi*, *Bunbulama* and her brother *Wuluwait* covers two different activities. In the myth of the bark painting and the carved figure, the activities of the two *Mokoi* centre on rain-making. In the myth of the bark figure their chief function is to entertain the *dua* spirits of the dead on their journey from earth to their heaven, Purelko.

*773 776 The *Mokoi*, *Bunbulama* and her brother *Wuluwait*, live in a jungle called Mumulara, on the western shores of Melville Bay. In the early days *Wuluwait* was a good hunter of turtles. One day, when out in his canoe, he sighted a particularly large *dua* turtle floating on the water, but in spite of all his care he could not get close enough to spear it. Disappointed, *Wuluwait* returned and told *Bunbulama* about his bad luck. She persuaded him not to be worried about the loss of the turtle because, as there was always plenty of food on the sea coast and in the surrounding jungle, she would be able to collect sufficient food for them both. From then until now the woman, *Bunbulama*, has provided the food.

[775 616] At the present time, however, it is the duty of these two *Mokoi* to entertain the *dua* spirits of the dead during the first evening of their journey to the *dua* heaven, Purelko. When it becomes dark the woman, *Bunbulama*, returning from the jungle with a bundle of red blossoms called *banamin*,[88] asks her brother to blow his drone tube, so that the travelling spirits will find *Bunbulama's* camp. When they arrive, everyone spends the hours of darkness in dance and ceremony, carrying in their hands the flowers gathered by *Bunbulama*.[89] As daylight approaches, the *dua* spirits of the dead depart on the next stage of their journey to Purelko, via Dambalia (Bremer Island), and the brother and sister go back into the dense jungle so that none of the aborigines can see them.

[*532] Figure 65C illustrates the bark figure of the woman, *Bunbulama*; Fig. 65D, her brother *Wuluwait*. Both figures have grass stuck in their head and a projection from the chin which represents a beard.[90]

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[88] In another myth, this flower is called *wakuru-nani*, p. 327.

[89] See myth of journey of the *dua* dead, p. 325.

[90] My informants stated that the woman, *Bunbulama*, wore a beard, similar to that of her brother. This beard, however, is not shown on the bark painting of these two people, Pl. 94C.

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

5. FIGURES MOULDED IN WAX

(1) HUMAN FIGURES

Among the wax figures collected at Yirrkalla was one of the boomerang-man, *Oijal*, and one of his wife, *Neri-neri*. McConnel[91] records a waxen human figure used in the increase ceremonies of Cape York, and Elkin and the Berndts[92] several at Yirrkalla which, they claim, were used in imitative love magic and to cause the death of an enemy. 237 532* [171] [789]

Plate 104E is *Oijal* with boomerang-shaped designs painted on both the front and the back of the figure. Around his neck the lines of dots have the same meaning as in the bark painting, Pl. 29A, i.e. body decorations. Pl. 104F is *Neri-neri*, whose body is also decorated with lines of paint.

(2) CREATURES

The aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land are expert in the modelling of small animal and human figures, called *kamou korngi*, from the wax of the wild bees. This wax, much more plastic than that of the European bee, is warmed slightly over the fire and moulded into shape by the fingers. When the craftsman is satisfied with his modelling, he paints the figures with designs. These sometimes indicate the moiety and *mata* (language group) of the totemic creature. McCarthy[93] figures a kangaroo, a turtle and a crocodile from a Yirrkalla collection presented to the Australian Museum by Rev. F. W. Chaseling. [616]

Plate 143: A is the *dua* emu, *marluwai*. B is the green turtle, *gariwa*. The totemic place of this *dua* creature is on the sea floor between Yirrkalla and Bremer Island.[94] C is the *jiritja* night-bird, *karawak*, which was associated with the opossum, *marungo*, at Cape Shield.[95] D is the queen fish, *tinimbu*, belonging to the *jiritja* myths of Cape Arnhem.[96] E is the bandicoot, *warnt-kura*, whose nest was destroyed by a bush-fire. The *gumaitj mata* design for fire is painted on the side of its body.[97] F is a fresh-water fish, *paipinga*, which the mythical man *Laitjun* used to catch in his fish trap at the mouth of the Koolatong River.[98] G is the dugong, *balwakmeri*. This creature is one of the main foods of the inhabitants of the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma.[99] H is the *dua* kangaroo, *karitjambal*. 532* 616 773*

6. CREATURES CARVED IN WOOD

The aborigines of Yirrkalla, and to a lesser extent those of Groote Eylandt, carve simple wooden figures of various creatures. The fact that in the collection of the South Australian Museum there are examples of similar wooden figures from Melville, Goulburn and Elcho Islands suggests that this craft is carried out over most, if not all, of Arnhem Land. 532* 171

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[91] McConnel (1935), Pl. XVII, Fig. F.

[92] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 10A, p. 100.

[93] McCarthy (1938), Fig. 40.

[94] Painted coffin, Pl. 102C, D.

[95] Carved message stick, Fig. 65A, B.

[96] Bark painting, Pl. 110B.

[97] Bark painting, Pl. 110B.

[98] Engraved pipe, Fig. 60D.

[99] Bark painting, Pl. 110A.

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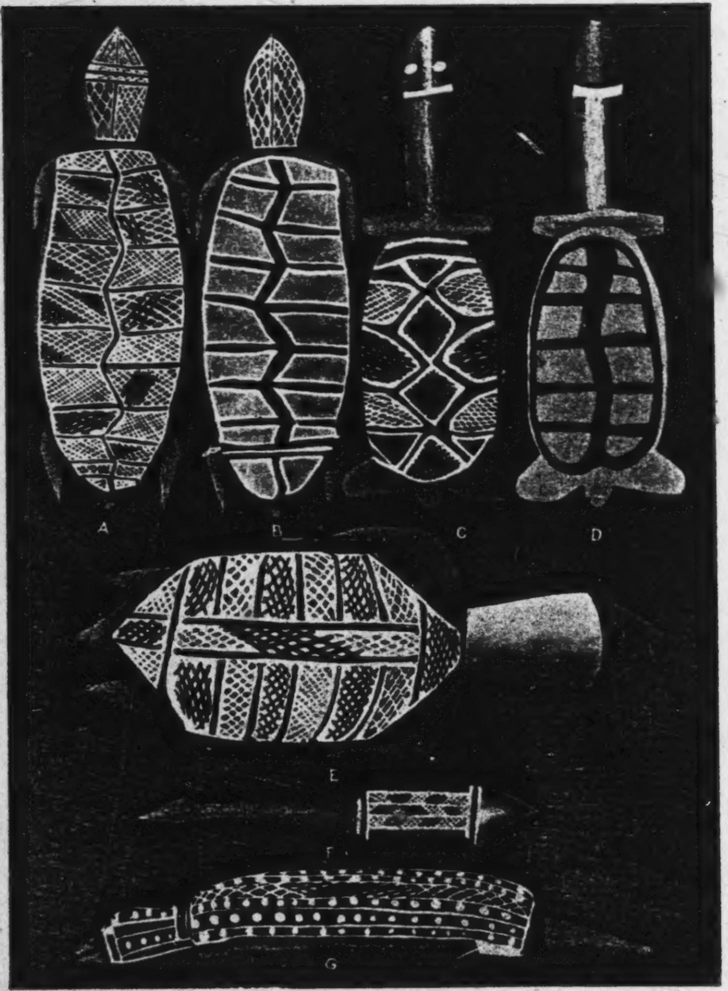

Plate 141. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B, E The green turtle C, D The tortoise F The snake-bird G The bandicoot

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

(1) YIRRKALLA

The Green Turtle, Gariwa

In creation times, when the *dua* green turtle, *gariwa*, and the *jiritja* hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, were men, they lived together on the beach at Yirrkalla. 532* One day, when the two men were discussing some trivial matter, the hawksbill 773* man lost his temper and speared the green-turtle man. The wounded man was so enraged over this unjustified attack that he changed himself into the green turtle. His totemic place is now at the bottom of the sea, between Yirrkalla [823 and Bremer Island.[1] 778]

Plate 141A, B, E is two carved figures, in the round, of the present-day green turtle, *gariwa*. The designs on the back represent the shell pattern of the carapace.

The Serpent, Wununga

This staff, from Milingimbi, represents *wununga*, the mythical serpent, whose voice is the sound of the log gong, *uvar*.[2] This serpent, also called *muit*,[3] lives [534] in a large waterhole at Milingimbi. The staff is used in the *narra* rituals.

The main design on Pl. 134A is the mythical serpent, *wununga*; the smaller designs are young snakes, the progeny of *wununga*. No explanation was obtained for the chevron designs on the upper part of the staff. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

The Night-bird, Karawak, and the Opossum, Marungo

The night-bird, *karawak*, is associated in some undetermined way with the [776] *Mokoi* of the dead.[4] In another mythological story[5] *karawak* (probably one of the owls) was friends with the opossum, *marungo*.

The Ceremonial Staff. This staff, Pl. 134E, is used in the totemic ceremonies 532* of the night-bird, *karawak*. It represents a totemic tree near Cape Shields, on 773* which *karawak* sat to talk to the opossum. The carved figure on the top is the night-bird. The same design is repeated lower down. The wavy lines have the 778 same meaning as those on the bark painting of *marungo* and *karawak*,[6] i.e. the marks made by the opossum as it wandered round the base of the totemic tree where *karawak* was perched.

The Shark, Mana, at Blue Mud Bay

For myth, see p. 372.

The Carved Figure. On Pl. 132A the series of rectangles means the same as those on the bark painting of the shark, *mana*,[7] i.e. dead palm leaves floating

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[1] See painted coffin of turtle-man, *Gariwa*, Pl. 102C., D.

[2] See log gong, Pl. 147A, C; also Warner (1937), p. 314.

[3] The serpent *muit* which, in the myth of the *gunabibi* ceremony at Milingimbi, swallowed the *Wawalik* sister, although considered by some to be more powerful than *julunggul*, is really the same mythical creature (see Warner, 1937, p. 372).

[4] Myth, p. 312.

[5] Bark paintings, Pl. 115E; also engraved ceremonial message sticks, Fig. 65A, B.

[6] Myth, p. 362.

[7] This is the symbolism employed on the bark painting of *mana*, Pl. 119B.

*532 on the surface of the swamp. The four vertical panels, *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, are posts used
*773 in the fish trap,[8] the dark line *a* being a larger and much stronger post than the
778 others. The carving lines at the head of the shark are the leaves and the white dots the bulbs of the spike rush, *rukia*.

Looking at the top, Pl. 132B, the rectangles and the intersecting lines still represent the palm leaves and the posts. In the black rectangle, *b* is the fish spear with which *Borolo-borolo* wounded *mana* at Cape Arnhem.[9]

The designs on the bottom of the carved figure, Pl. 132C, are a simple form of X-ray art. The meandering line within the long black diamond indicates the intestines of the fish, and the long oval toward the tail, the vent.

Miscellaneous Creatures

*532 Plate 137E is a simple wooden figure of the echidna,[10] *tjirumuna*, which was
*773 speared by the plover-man, *Tjutju* (see myth, p. 354).

Plate 137F is the carving in the round of an unidentified shark.

Plate 141C, D illustrates the obverse and reverse sides of a fresh-water tortoise.

Plate 141F and Pl. 142D are carved wooden figures of a snake-bird, or darter (*Anhinga novæ-hollandiæ*). On Pl. 142D both the wings and the curiously jointed neck are indicated.

Plate 141G is the wooden figure of the bandicoot, *warut-kura*. During creation times some careless men, while performing a ceremony on the Gainmaui River, near Caledon Bay, started a bush-fire which burnt out the nest of the bandicoot.[11]

Plate 141J is an unidentified fish.

Plate 141K is the *jiritja* goanna, *bije*, which is associated with the yellow ochre deposit at Garunga.

(2) GROOTE EYLANDT

171 Plate 142A is a piece of painted bark cut into the shape of a stingray, *imadoaja*. The men of Groote Eylandt make these simple bark figures as playthings for their children. The kidney-shaped design is the edible fat within the body of the stingray.

Plate 142B, C shows the obverse and reverse sides of a sheet of painted bark from Groote Eylandt which represents the green turtle, *imoraka*.

Plate 142E is a carved figure of a fish (possibly a leather-jacket). Although this is the only example of carving in the round I collected when at Groote Eylandt, its presence indicates that the Groote Eylandters practise this form of art. The aborigines of Groote Eylandt also carved simple faces, with eyes, nose and mouth, on the sacred poles of the *amawaltja* ceremony (Pl. 12A).

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[8] Bark painting, Pl. 119B.

[9] It is of interest to note that although in the myth *mana* was a man whilst at Cape Arnhem, he was wounded by *Borolo-borolo* with a multi-pronged fish-spear.

[10] Bark painting, Pl. 113B.

[11] Bark painting, Pl. 116D.

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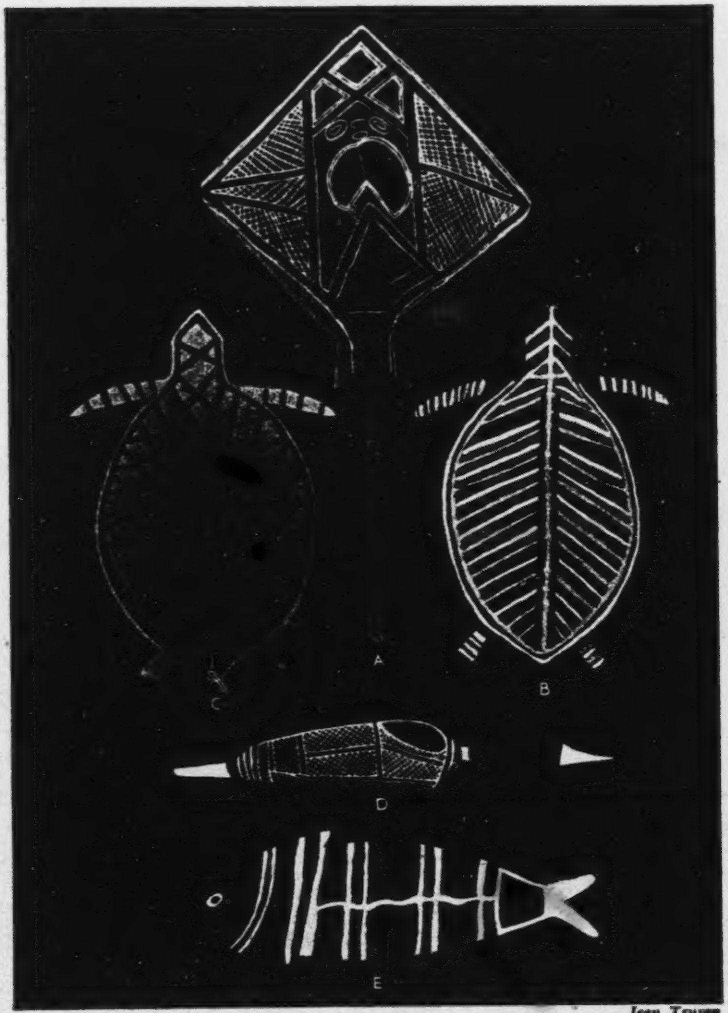

Jean Truran

PLATE 142. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla and Groote Eylandt
A Stingray B, C Turtle D Snake-bird E Fish

ARNHEM LAND: ART, MYTH AND SYMBOLISM

7. DECORATED IMPLEMENTS AND WEAPONS

*532 171 The aborigines of Australia gain much pleasure from the painting of their implements and weapons. The painted shields of Queensland[12] and the engraved boomerangs of northern New South Wales[13] are typical examples.

[517] In Arnhem Land, where neither the shield nor the boomerang is used, it is the paddles and the spear-throwers which receive the attention of the artists. Warner[14] records that among the aborigines of Milingimbi, 'although the paints dissolve immediately in water, the natives often paint their paddles for the mere pleasure of decorating them and seeing their beauty.' The natives of Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla paint both their spear-throwers and their paddles. At the latter place the blades of many of the paddles are covered with engraved or painted designs of totemic significance.

(1) PADDLES FRO[illegible]KALLA

The Spirit Men, Maranatuer and Bunjinkum

*773 776 Two brothers, *Maranatuer* and *Bunjinkum*, noted fishermen and hunters, once lived at Jumbara-pinja, a locality on the Pali-pali River which runs into Arnhem Bay.[15] One day the two *Mokoi* speared a particularly large *dua* turtle called *talibu* (possibly a logger-head),[16] which was so powerful that it towed them far out to sea before they were able to haul the turtle close enough to the canoe to kill it. This accomplished, they paddled back to their camp at Jumbara-pinja, disembowelled the creature and put it on the fire to cook.

[132 221] Whilst they were waiting, *Maranatuer* looked toward the south and saw the dry-season wind, *timaru*, coming toward them. They were just congratulating each other about this, for the period of the *timaru* wind is the season of maturing fruits and underground tubers, when *Bunjinkum*, looking in the opposite direction, saw *Tjambuwal*, of the wet-season wind, *bara*, approaching. Not wishing to be caught between the two winds the brothers hastily ate the turtle, embarked in their canoe and paddled to Jarkala, an island midway between Elcho and the Wessels. Then, hearing that two other *Mokoi*, *Gunbiri* and *Kaiamburo*, friends of theirs, were living on an adjacent island, the brothers left Jarkala and went to stay with them. The four *Mokoi* still live on that island, although no aborigines have ever seen them.

*532 Plate 144C, D is the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle.

*773 776 The central vertical panel on Pl. 144C is the River Pali-pali, at Arnhem Bay, along which the brothers paddled their canoe when they were setting out to catch a turtle. The cross-hatched transverse bands on either side of the river indicate the rocks and sand-banks in its bed.

In the middle of Pl. 144D is the canoe and its occupants, *Maranatuer* being at the top and *Bunjinkum* at the bottom. The dark-coloured bands in panel *a*

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[12] McConnel (1935), pp. 49-68.
[13] Davidson (1937), p. 23.
[14] Warner (1937), p. 492.
[15] Map, Fig. 57.
[136] [16] The logger-head turtle (*Caretta caretta*) is known to have reached the weight of two tons.

[text continues on p. 452]

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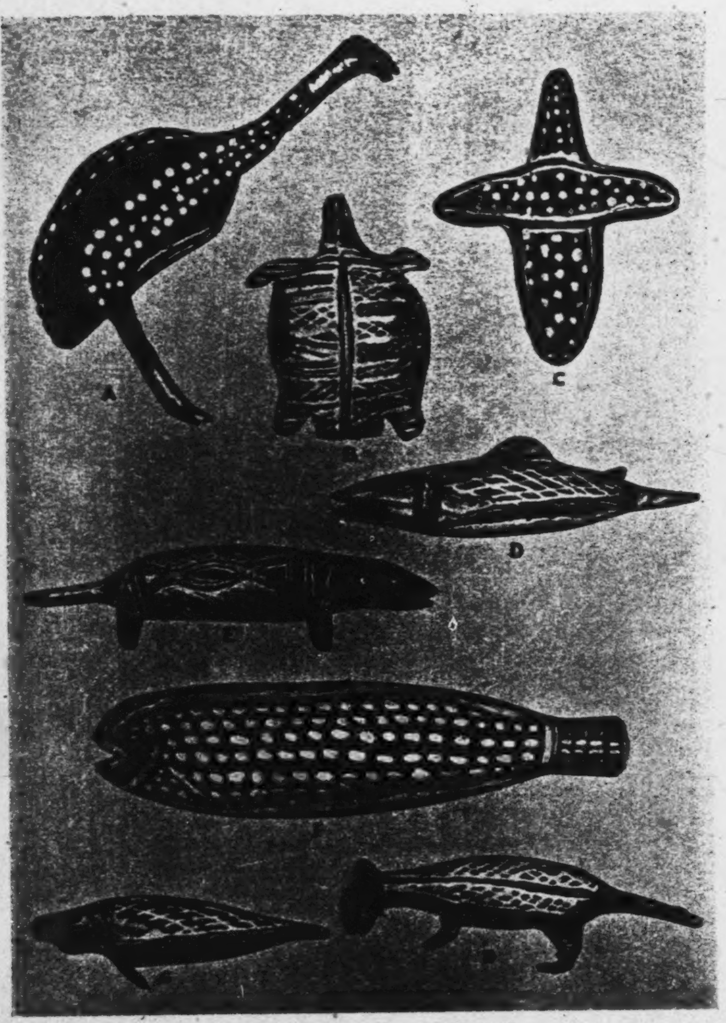

PLATE 143. Waxen figures, Yirrkalla

A The emu, marluwai	B The turtle, gariwa	C The night-bird, karawak
D The queen-fish, tinimbu	E The bandicoot, warnt-kura	F The fish, paipinga
G The dugong, balwakmeri	H The kangaroo, karitjambal	

*532 *773 776 represent rocks, the light ones the sea breaking over them. In panel *b* the bands have a similar meaning, the darker being large rocks under which the turtles shelter, and the lighter ones the breaking waves.

The Spirit People, Balu-balu

Two *dua* spirit people, or *Mokoi*, a man and his sister, called the *Balu-balu*, once lived on Bungara Island, which is situated between Woodah Island and the shores of Blue Mud Bay.[17] One day, when the man was out in his canoe, called *Baratja*,[18] he saw a particularly large fish but, being over-anxious, did not take sufficient care and the fish escaped. He returned to camp and told his sister about his misfortunes. She sympathized with him and suggested that, perhaps, if next time they both went out in the canoe they might have better luck, and so it happened, for they caught a *dua* green turtle, *gariwa*. Putting the turtle into their canoe, they took it with them to Purelko, the *dua* home of the dead, where they cooked and ate it in the company of other *Mokoi*.

As their turtle rope was becoming rotten the *Balu-balu* decided to make a new one.[19] The woman collected and shredded a large quantity of bark which the man twisted into a rope. When finished it was so long that when one end was at Purelko the other reached Bungara Island. Since that time the brother and sister set out every morning for Bungara Island to catch a *dua* turtle and take it back to Purelko to be cooked and shared with the other *Mokoi*.

Although the aborigines claim they have often seen the marks of the *Balu-balu's* canoe on the shore at Bungara Island, none has ever seen these spirit people.

Plate 144E, F shows the obverse and reverse side of the paddle.

On panel *a* of E is a group of sea-urchins, *jatin*, the food of the green turtles, *gariwa*. The spirit canoe, *Baratja*, of the *Balu-balu*, is in panel *b*. Within the canoe is the green turtle the *Mokoi* are taking to Purelko. Below the canoe is another turtle and, on either side, two harmless *dua* sea snakes, called *jalu*.

The reverse side, F, panel *b*, is occupied by a green turtle and two *jalu* snakes. In panel *a* is another *dua* turtle, two sea snakes and some sea-urchins.

The Dua Totem Creatures of Melville Bay

When the dolphins *injipana* and *bulanbir* were men, they shifted their camp from Arnhem Bay to Waupili, at Melville Bay, to be present at a ceremony in which all the green-turtle and dolphin men took part. Whilst this was going on a *Mokoi*, on his way to Purelko, speared one of the participants, called *Madapang*. This attack gave everyone such a fright that both the dolphin and the turtle men went into the water and became sea creatures. The body of the

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[17] Map. Fig. 1.

[18] The spirits of the *jiritja* 'heaven' also have a special name for the canoe in which they catch dugong at Cape Arnhem, p. 316.

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[19] Turtle rope is made from twisted strands of bark; Tindale (1926), p. 115, describes the method of manufacture.

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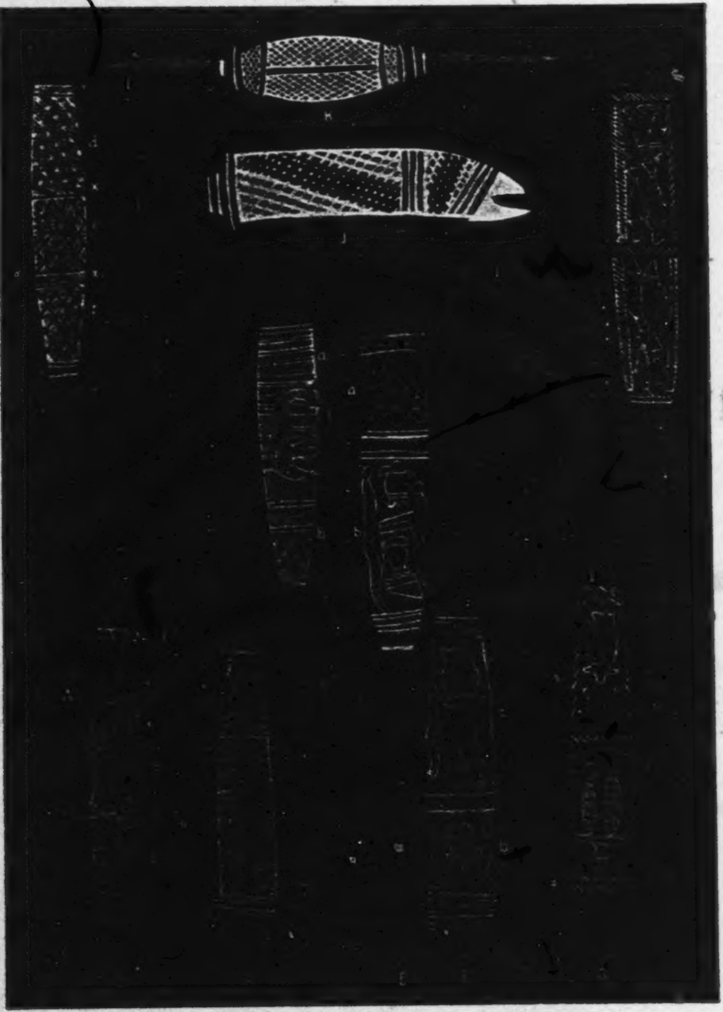

Plate 144. Carved figures, painted paddles and ceremonial objects

A, B, The tortoise, mimala
E, F The Mokoi, Balu-balu
J Fish, unidentified
C, D The Mokoi, Maranatuer and [illegible]
G, H Dua creatures of Melville Bay
K The goanna, bije

*532 The body of the
*773 murdered turtle man, *Madapang*, is now a large rock on the mainland opposite
776 Bremer Island.

[778 Plate 144G, H shows the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle.
823] The upper panel on the reverse side, G, is occupied by the *dua* green turtle, *gariwa*, and the lower by a similar but larger turtle, *madapang*. The latter is the turtle who, when a man, was killed by the *Mokoi* at Melville Bay. The short transverse panels of cross-hatching near the head and tail of the turtle, *madapang*, indicate seaweed, the food of the creature, and the long panels on either side, the sea.

In the upper panel of the obverse side, H, are five dolphins, called *injipana*, and in the lower, five dolphins of a different species, called *bulanbir*. The cross-hatched panels indicate smooth sea water at the totemic place.

The panels at the head of the upper turtle indicate where the reptile dug in the sand to lay its eggs; the long panels on either side represent sea-water. The rounded end of the paddle indicates that it belongs to a man of the *dua* moiety.[20]

(2) Painted Paddles and Spear-throwers from Groote Eylandt

171 On Pl. 145 are four paddles from Groote Eylandt, A, B, C, D and E.

No interpretations were gathered of the various designs painted on the paddles. In the upper panel of Pl. 145A is the figure of a man associated with what appears to be a wind symbol,[21] on Pl. 145D a dugong and a turtle, and on Pl. 145E another dugong. Collected by F. D. McCarthy.

On Pl. 146 are four spear-throwers from Groote Eylandt, A, B and C, D and E, and F. Although, as with the paddles, no interpretations were gathered, it is possible to distinguish a dolphin on D, and a turtle and possibly a bandicoot on E. Collected by F. M. Setzler.

(3) The Log Gongs

172 Two log gongs were collected in Arnhem Land, one (Pl. 147A, C) called
534 *uwar*, by F. M. Setzler and F. D. McCarthy, whilst engaged on archaeological
research at Milingimbi, and one (Pl. 147D) called *ubara*, by myself, at Oenpelli.

Warner, when carrying out research among the aborigines of Milingimbi
796 during 1927-8, saw the log gong in use and gives a full description of its
534 function.[22] According to him, the gong, which is beaten with a frayed section
of pandanus root, is used only in the *ulmark* cycle of ceremonies. When the
women hear the sound of the gong, which they believe is the voice of the serpent
[789] *muit*,[23] they assemble in the camp and continuously repeat the call, *kait-bo*.
This call protects the women from harm, it being the same as that used by the

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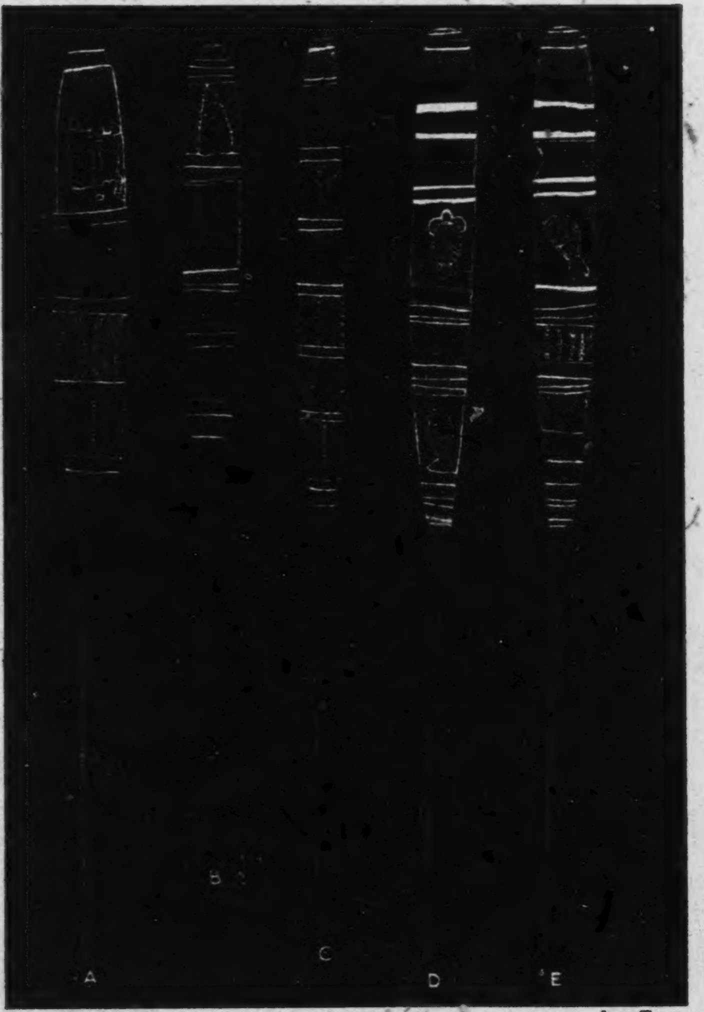
[20] For shape of a *jiritja* paddle, Fig. 58A, B.

[21] Bark painting of south-east wind, Pl. 24D.

[22] Warner (1937), pp. 315-16.

[23] Another name for *jurlungur*, the mythical serpent, who swallowed the *Wawalik* sisters (see myth, p. 278, and Warner (1937), p. 372).

[text continues on p. 456]



Jean Truran

PLATE 145. Painted paddles, Groote Eylandt

796 *Wawalik* sisters in their attempt to drive the serpent, *jurlungur*, or *muit*, back
789 into the Mirrirmina waterhole (myth, p. 279).

THE MILINGIMBI LOG GONG

*532 This incomplete myth, associated with the Milingimbi gong, *uvar* (Pl. 147A,
*773 C), and the designs painted on it, deals with a man, *Julpaipai*, his wife,
534 *Gutjabaui*, and their daughter.

During creation times, *Julpaipai* and his wife travelled from Nilipidji (the famous aboriginal flint quarry, the source of the best flint knives) to the country belonging to the Liagolommira (Warner's Liaalaomir) clan on the Goyder River, where they created a sacred waterhole, Miaramina (Warner's Mirrirmina). Whilst camped beside this waterhole *Gutjabaui* gave birth to a daughter. Later *Julpaipai* sent his wife to Miaramina to collect food, and whilst there she was raped by a mythical rock python that lived in the waterhole.[24] As *Julpaipai* was making a fire to cook the food collected by his wife, he saw a dog chase a goanna up a tree used only in the women's ceremonies. Later, the goanna was followed by many spiders and a rat.

The central figure of Pl. 147A, C, is the man, *Julpaipai*, carrying a feather plume in his left hand. The lines radiating from his head indicate his hair. To the left of his head is a boomerang.[25] To the left of *Julpaipai* is his daughter, wearing a feather plume on her head and carrying another in her hand. To the left of her again is a wooden spear, resting on a boomerang. The animal near by is the rat, *marawata*, which the dog chased up the sacred tree, *warguritja*, shown immediately above. On the extreme left of the design is a digging stick belonging to *Julpaipai's* daughter.

Reading from the right of the central figure, the small beetle-like designs are the spiders, *dipala*, which followed the rat and the goanna up the tree. Near the right hand of the mythical man is his spear-thrower and two wooden spears. The figure to the extreme right is the woman, *Gutjabaui*, holding a spear-thrower in one hand a digging stick in the other. The design to the left of her head is a yam she has dug out of the ground.[26] Associated with the log is a ceremonial object, Pl. 147B, perhaps a beater, its painted designs symbolizing green ants, *tapalang*, and their nest. Myth and interpretation by F. M. Setzler and F. D. McCarthy.

THE LOG GONG, UBARA, OENPELLI

171 The log gong, Pl. 147D, was used in the *ubara* ceremonies witnessed during our stay at Oenpelli. According to my informants, the designs had no specific

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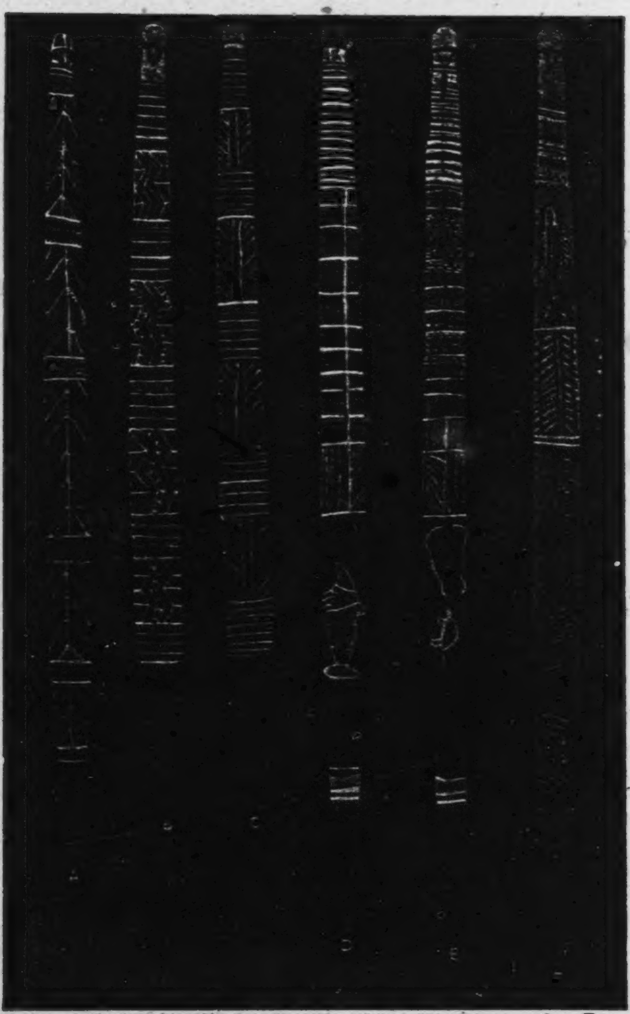
[24] This myth has many points of resemblance with that of the *Wawalik* sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250). Both the clan and the sacred well have similar names, and the woman, *Gutjabaui*, gave birth to a child near the sacred well. Later the woman was raped, instead of being swallowed, by a mythical rock python which lived in the sacred well of Miaramina.

[439] [25] Although boomerangs are not made by the men of Arnhem Land, they reach Milingimbi from the south through the medium of a remarkable trade cycle. This trade cycle is described by Thomson (1949).

[26] Warner (1937), p. 313, mentions that the log gong is 'painted with snake figures, emus and other animals as well as plants'.



Jean Truran

Plate 146. Painted spear-throwers, Groote Eylandt

171 meaning. There is, however, a myth which explains how the log drum, *ubara*, and the beater, *labait*, were first made.

At one time, a mythical man cut down a hollow tree and left it lying on the ground. Next morning his dog, *Balnuknuk*, went out hunting and, seeing a bandicoot enter the hollow log, ran across and started to pull it out. As he did so the bandicoot transformed itself into a beating stick, *labait*, a frayed stump of pandanus root, which today is used to beat the sacred log at the *ubara* ceremonies. Just as the dog (which at the same time changed itself into a man) had taken the drum stick, *labait*, in his hand, he heard the drumming call of the emu. *Balnuknuk* listened intently, then, striking the hollow log with the drum stick, found that he could make the same sound as the emu. He was so pleased with the sound made by the hollow log that he gave it his own name (*balnuknuk* is the sacred name, *ubara* the common name).

After hiding the log gong, which today is sacred, and the beating stick, *labait*, *Balnuknuk* visited a camp of aborigines, telling the fully initiated men about his new find and inviting them to come and see and hear it. The men, pleased with the appearance and sound of the wooden gong, asked *Balnuknuk* about his plans. *Balnuknuk* then explained that he intended to show the initiated men how to perform the *ubara* ceremony, in which the hollow log would take a central part, but only on the understanding that no women or uninitiated youths must be allowed to see the gong, or even hear its note. When all had agreed, *Balnuknuk* taught the men the songs and dances of the *ubara* ceremony[27] and then disappeared into the ground, leaving behind, for the use of future generations, his ceremony with its special songs and dances, his wooden gong, *balnuknuk*, and the beater, *labait*. See bark painting, Pl. 61D.

I was able to see this log gong in all stages of manufacture. When the old men had agreed to perform the *ubara* ceremony, two men went to a locality where there were many hollow trees and, tapping their trunks with a stone, picked out one whose sound indicated that it would make a good gong. They felled the tree, cut out a five-foot section, removed the bark from the outside and the termite nest inside it, and putting the hollow log on their shoulders, brought it back to camp. For a considerable time, several aborigines sat around the log, beating it in different places with the frayed stump of a pandanus root until they decided the best spot to strike so that the log would give the loudest and most resonant note. Once this spot was determined, the position was marked with a rectangle of yellow (on the left of Pl. 117D). The gong was then painted with bands of colour, and covered with red, yellow and black dots.[28]

In use, the gong was either carried under the arm, as described by Warner,[29] or rested on the knees (Pl. 117E).

When Spencer visited Oenpelli he saw, and described in some detail, a ceremony which he called the Ober[30] (almost certainly the same as my *ubara*).

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[27] Mountford (1949), p. 770.

[28] Mountford (1949), p. 773.

[29] Warner (1937), p. 311.

[30] Spencer (1914), p. 135.

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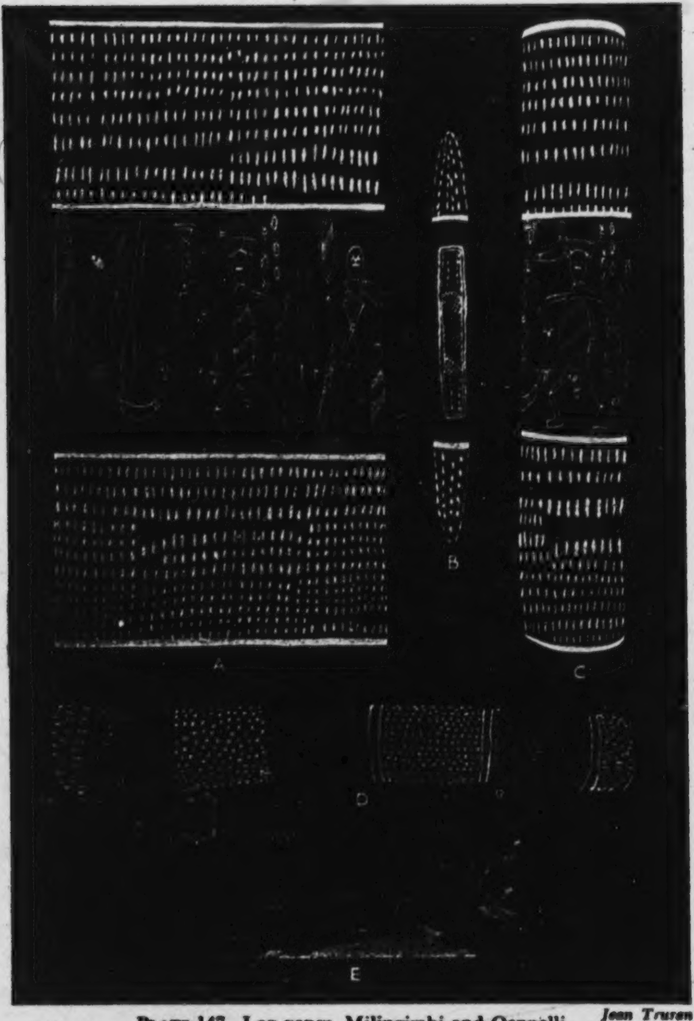

PLATE 147. Log gongs, Milingimbi and Oenpelli

Jean Truran

A, C Log gong, Milingimbi
D Log gong, Oenpelli
B Ceremonial object, Milingimbi
E Method of holding log gong, Oenpelli

17 In his description, however, he makes no reference to the log gong, which he could not have missed, as it takes so central a part in the present-day rituals. This indicates that the log gong, without doubt a recent importation into Australia, had not reached Oenpelli at the time of Spencer's visit. If this surmise is correct, then the myth associated with the gong[31] is also a recent introduction to explain the origin of a new cultural trait.

8. CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF WESTERN ARNHEM LAND

Spencer gathered much information about the carved and painted objects of western Arnhem Land known under the general name of *muraian*. He figured a number of them, some being similar in appearance to those I collected.[32]

Spencer also described a *muraian* ceremony he saw in 1912,[33] during which a number of these sacred objects were displayed. The function of that ceremony was to magically increase the supply of living creatures which each *muraian* represented. Further, Spencer found that these *muraian*, or their duplicates, are inherited from father to son. He writes[34]: 'The history of every stick and stone and the names of all individuals who have possessed them in succession is perfectly well known.' These *muraian*, being particularly sacred, were either brought to my tent at night or, if in the daytime, heavily wrapped in paper-bark. They were only exhibited when the tent door was closed.

The *muraian* of western Arnhem Land might be compared—and indeed they appear to perform a similar function—to the *tjurunga* of the Aranda tribe of Central Australia. They are stored in secret caves; they are associated with, and possibly the repository of, the spirit of the respective totemic food ancestor; each carries a mythical story about its creator, some of the details of which are painted on the particular *muraian*; and they, like the *tjurunga* of the Aranda, are employed to increase the supply of the particular creature or plant.

The Jungle Birds, Caujut and Iunga-iunga

Plate 148A is associated with an unlocalized totemic place, once the camp of two mythical jungle-bird men, *Caujut* and *Iunga-iunga*. The longitudinal parallel lines at the top and bottom represent the road along which *Caujut* and *Iunga-iunga* travelled to their camp; the central design is one of the bird-men sitting within that camp.

The Man, Mandelwilpa

This *muraian*, Pl. 148C, belongs to the mythical man *Mandelwilpa*, whose totemic place is on Korpang Creek.[35] The sacred object is also associated with the *ubara* (log gong) ceremony.[36]

When the aborigines decide to perform the *ubara* ceremony the messengers, taking the *muraian* of *Mandelwilpa* with them, visit the various camps and

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[31] Myth, p. 158.

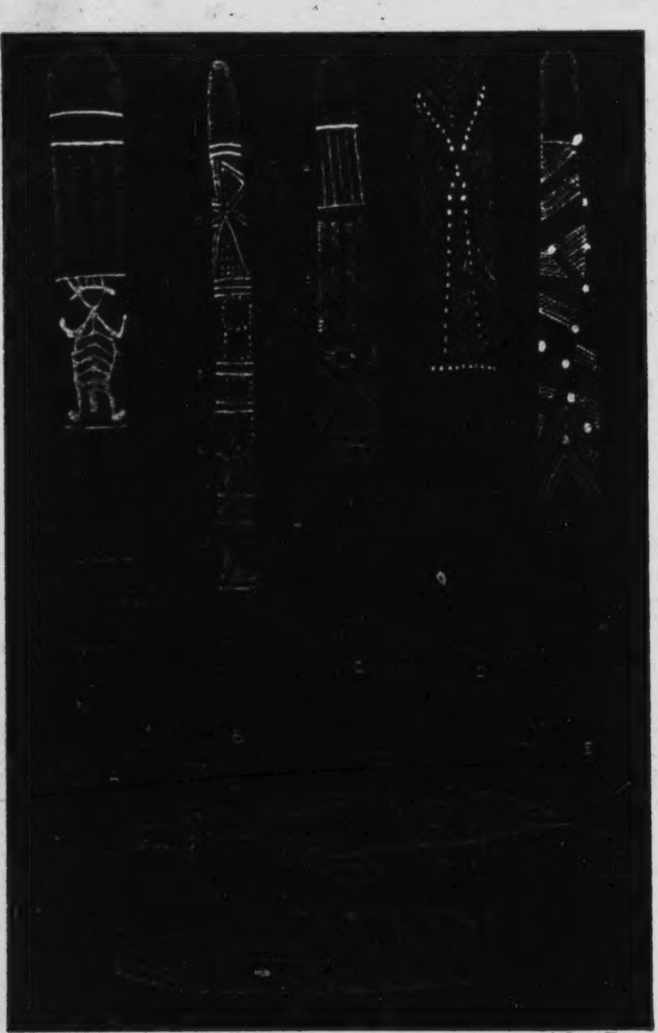
[32] Spencer (1928), Fig. 542, 543, Pl. XVI.

[33] Spencer (1928), p. 832.

[34] Spencer (1928), p. 837.

[35] Map, Fig. 10.

[36] Mountford (1949), pp. 770-3.



Jean Travers

PLATE 148. Ceremonial objects, western Arnhem Land

A The jungle-birds, canjut and iunga-iunga
B The diver-duck, jinin-lakija
C The moon, Mandelwilpa
D The snake-bird, kala-bali-bali
E The rainbow-serpent, unjaut
F, G The barramundi, kimberikara

171 arrange for the fully initiated men to assemble at a certain locality. Whilst some of the men find a hollow tree, from which to cut a section for the log drum, others erect four bush houses in the jungle, two for the *jiritja* and two for the *dua* moiety. The ceremony lasts from new moon to new moon. The first three weeks are spent in the performance of the rituals, and the last week in giving instructions about the meaning of the myths and rituals to those who have not previously taken part in the ceremony. While this is going on, the women are busily engaged gathering and preparing large quantities of food for a ceremonial meal. After the newcomers are fully instructed, the participants eat the special meal, bathe ceremonially in a nearby waterhole, and the rituals, for that year, are complete.[37]

On Pl. 148C the parallel longitudinal lines in the upper panel, *a*, and the parallel cross-hatched panels, *b*, represent the roads leading to the ceremonial house of the man *Mandelwilpa*. The lower panel with the crossed diagonal lines indicates the house. *Mandelwilpa* is the star-like design in the upper triangle of his house. The two stars at the bottom are the 'eyes' of the sacred object.

The Darter, or Snake-bird, Kulu-baii-baii

The totem place of the darter or snake-bird, *Kulu-baii-baii*, is situated not far from a large swamp called Nundjaika-djun, near the source of the Liverpool River.[38] The ancestral bird decreed that his design must be painted on the bodies of every man who takes part in his ceremonies and that no one without a beard, i.e. a youth, a child or a woman, can kill or eat a darter. If anyone did so, the spirit of the darter would make him so ill he would die.

The diagonal lines on Pl. 148D represent the tracks of the darter or snake-bird[39] as it walked from one place to another. The designs within the upper and lower triangles are the feather patterns on the bird's back, and the cross-hatching within the outer triangles, the feathers on other parts of its body.

The Rainbow-serpent, Unjaut

The rainbow-serpent, *unjaut*, lives, during the dry season, in a large swamp, Kajabet, at the source of the Liverpool River. During the monsoon season it is seen among the clouds in the form of a rainbow. Should anyone be so foolhardy as to drink the water of the Kajabet swamp, bathe in it, or even so much as visit the locality, the serpent will first kill the intruder by consuming his spirit, and then create thunderstorms so large that they will flood the land and drown the people. For that reason *unjaut*, the serpent, is greatly feared and its totemic swamp shunned by all.

[37] This is a fragmentary account of a ceremony which almost certainly is a variant of the *dua* and *jiritja narra* rituals recorded by Warner (1937), ch. 8, and of the *amuraltja* ceremony of Groote Eylandt, p. 21.

[38] Map, Fig. 1.

[39] Called the snake-bird because of the reptilian appearance of its head and neck whilst fishing.

This object, Pl. 148E, is the *muraian* of the rainbow-serpent, *unjaut.* The lines of dots represent marks on the skin of the serpent, and the strings with feathers attached, its 'beard'.[40] The pointed projections symbolize the jaws, and the two groups of three triangular lines at the base, called *gunma-nari-nari*, the mouth and the tongue of the serpent. The cross-hatching indicates the scales.

The Barramundi, Kimbarikara

The totemic place of the barramundi-man, *Kimbarikara*, is adjacent to the swamp, Koaba-ropera, on the upper reaches of Koepang Creek.[41]

The sacred object is somewhat the shape of a fish. On one side, Pl. 148F, is the design of the barramundi, in which the vertebrae and the internal organs are portrayed. At the head of the barramundi is the mullet, *guandara*, which, according to the myth, was eaten, during creation times, by the barramundi (*Scleropoges* sp.). The band of sloping lines, *a*, near the tail symbolizes the totemic swamp, Koaba-ropera.

On the reverse side, Pl. 148G, the design is more conventionalized. The band of diagonal lines at *f*, near the tail, again represents the totemic swamp, and the cross-shaped design, *e*, streams which run into it. The four large cross-hatched panels symbolize the hair of the barramundi-man, and the two designs, *b* and *c*, his whiskers. The triangular design, *d*, is a small swamp near Koaba-ropera.

The Diver-duck, Jinia-laitja

The *muraian* of the diver-duck ancestors are the first a young initiate is allowed to see or handle. It is his duty to carry them, heavily wrapped in paper-bark, from one group of initiated men to another.

Plate 148B is the sacred staff of the diver-duck ancestors, father and son, *Jinia-laitja*, which belongs to a totemic waterhole, Gaba-balnara, near the Liverpool River. The intersecting lines at *a* indicate the roads by which the bird-men travelled to their totemic waterhole. The four dotted rectangles at *b* are the waterholes, Gaba-balnara; the white dots indicate paper-bark trees growing along the banks. The loops, *c*, toward the bottom of the staff, refer to markings on the back of the *Jinia-laitja*. The linked circles, *d*, are the eyes of the mythical bird-men.

Plate 149C belongs to the same two ancestral diver-duck men who were associated with a watercourse, Junatnada, near the Liverpool River. The three bands, *a*, toward the top represent the camps of the father and son; the transverse band, *b*, below it, the totemic creek, Junatnada; and the curving lines, the tracks made by the mythical people.

Another sacred object, Pl. 149A, belongs to the *Jinia-laitja*, another of whose totemic places, Namarounala, is situated on the beach near the mouth of the

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[40] Most mythical serpents associated with the rainbow are highly coloured and have both mane and beard. Mountford (1948), p. 138.

[41] Map, Fig. 10.

171 Liverpool River. The white lines meeting at an angle on the top, in panel *a*, are the wings of one of the diver-duck men, the *Jinia-laitja*, and the two short longitudinal lines in panel *b*, the paths by which the father and son travelled. The white dots on panels *a* and *b* are the feather patterns on the back of the birds. The three star-like figures at *c* symbolize waterholes created by the ancestors; the two lines of white dots immediately below, the camps of the father and son. The crossed diagonal lines on panel *d* are the paths made by the two people as they walked from one camp to the other. The white dots on the lower panel, *e*, are eggs, and the star-like designs on either side of the *muraian*, the eyes of the mythical men.

The Black Diver-duck, Bon-bon

A mythical diver-duck man, *Bon-bon*, whose totemic site is at an unlocalized place, Mandikadjan, painted designs on his body so that he could attend a ceremony. After he had transformed himself into a diver-duck, *Bon-bon* decreed that no woman, child, or man without a beard should kill or eat him. If they disobeyed, he would cause them to suffer severe pains in the legs, and perhaps to die. *Bon-bon* also decreed that the designs on the performers of the *bon-bon* totemic ceremonies should be the same as those he had painted on his own body.

The main design on the bark painting, Pl. 149B, is the body of the diver-duck, *bon-bon*. The projection at the top is the beak, the two small projections on each side, the legs, and the sharp point at the bottom, the tail of the bird. The designs on the body symbolize the feather patterns.

The Mackerel, Maidba

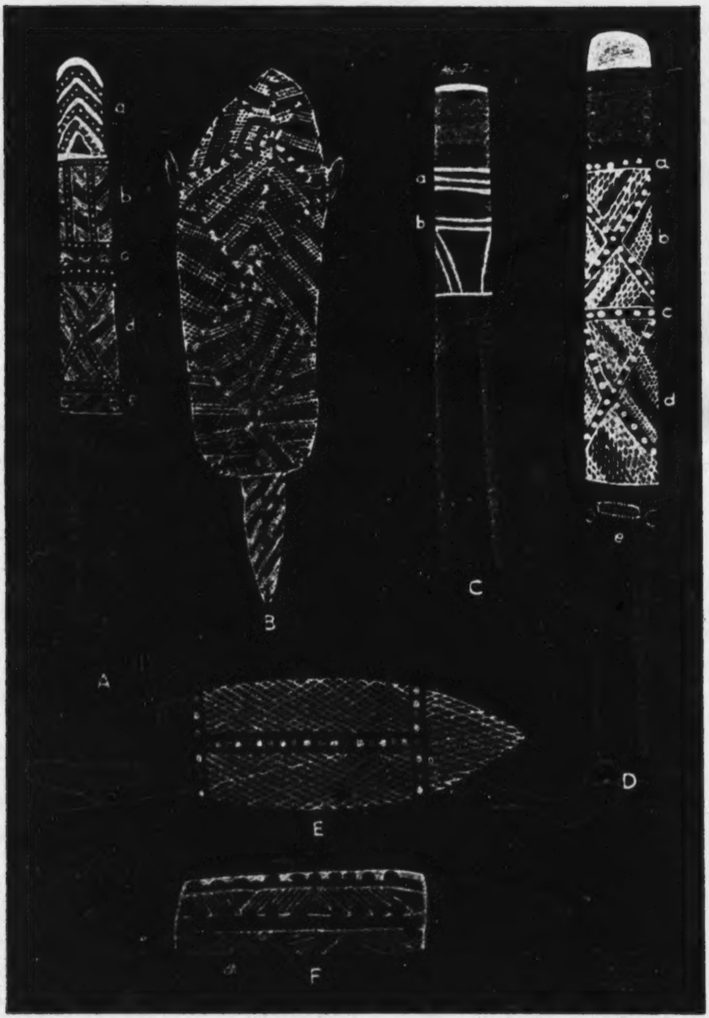
Plate 149D, a painted *muraian*, once belonged to a mythical fish-man, *Maidba*, whose totemic place, Balabanua, is at Rolling Bay,[42] near the Liverpool River.

The upper and middle transverse dotted lines, *a* and *c*, represent the fins of the fish, and the upper crossed diagonal lines, *b*, the bones. The lower crossed lines, *d*, are the roads along which the mythical fish-man travelled. His faeces are indicated by the white dots on the black lines and the oval figure, *e*, on the bottom of the stick. The two star-like figures near by are the eyes of the fish-man, *Maidba*.

The Water-lily Man, Magau

In early times a mythical water-lily man, *Magau*, who lived at a swamp called Munlarak-batmau, on the upper reaches of the Liverpool River, painted designs on a *muraian* similar to Pl. 149E. He was so pleased with the result that he decreed that ever afterwards those designs should be painted on both the sacred objects of his totem and on the bodies of all the men who took part in his ceremonies.

[42] Map. Fig. 1.



Jean Truran

PLATE 149. Carved and painted objects, western Arnhem Land

A, C The diver-duck, jinia-laitja B The black diver-duck man, Bon-Bon
D The mackerel-man, Maidba E The water-lily, magau F The man, Marouwil

171 Plate 149E shows the painted *muraian* of the water-lily totem. The lines of dots represent the blossoms; the parallel lines, the stalks—or their pithy centre—which the aborigines eat.

The Man, Marouwil

Plate 149F illustrates a *muraian* associated with a mythical man, *Marouwil*, whose totemic place, Anawounja, is near the Liverpool River.

The longitudinal lines represent the stomach of *Marouwil*; the dots, his faeces; and the cross-hatching, his fat.

9. MESSAGE STICKS

211 171 The scattered records of message sticks in the anthropological literature of the last seventy-five years indicate that, in one form or another, they have been, or still are being, used over most of aboriginal Australia. Spencer and Gillen,[43] however, found no evidence that sticks of the type recorded elsewhere were used by the Aranda tribe of Central Australia. Nor did I find any evidence of the use of message sticks among the aborigines of the western deserts of Central Australia, whose tribal lands are immediately west of the Aranda. Message sticks, however, are used by the aborigines of the Nullarbor Plain, which is on the southern fringe of the western deserts of Central Australia.[44] Roth,[45] in 1897, recorded fourteen message sticks from northern Queensland, and Howitt,[46] in 1904, twenty-one examples from south-eastern Australia. Both authors explained the meanings and the manner in which the sticks were used. Up to date, Roth and Howitt have made the major contributions to our knowledge of message sticks, although many other writers have referred to them.

According to both Howitt and Roth, message sticks were used for several purposes, namely, to call the participants of a ceremony together, to invite fellow-tribesmen to a hunt or a fight, and to convey a personal request from one aboriginal, through a messenger, to another, asking him for food or goods. Both Roth and Howitt, and in fact most of the other writers on the subject, are definite that the message sticks serve only as a memory aid, or perhaps a passport, the designs themselves having no recognizable meaning, nor could they be read without the aid of someone who had been told their meaning by the sender of the stick. On a number of the message sticks figured from Queensland by Roth, and from south-eastern Australia by Howitt, many of the designs referred to topographical features which the messenger would have to pass before he reached his destination. Sometimes there were notches, the length of the journey in days. Topographical details also were present on the message sticks I recorded from the southern edge of the Nullarbor Plain.[47]

211 There were, however, no such topographical details engraved on any of the examples collected at either Yirrkalla or Oenpelli. With the exception of the

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[43] Spencer and Gillen (1899), p. 142.

[44] Mountford (1938), p. 122.

[45] Roth (1897), p. 137, Fig. 326-38.

[46] Howitt (1904), pp. 691-70, Figs. 42-5.

[47] Mountford (1938), p. 122.

ceremonial message sticks, they were all personal requests for food, tobacco and 211
other goods used by the white man. I feel sure, however, that fuller research would reveal many more examples of the ceremonial type.

Whilst at Yirrkalla and Oenpelli I had to fly to Darwin several times on 211
expedition matters. Each time I went one or more aborigines gave me message 202
sticks to deliver to their friends at Darwin. My procedure (after I had made a 177
record of the message stick either by a sketch or a rubbing) was to write the meanings of the various symbols on a sheet of paper, wrap the paper round the message stick and enclose it in an envelope, on the outside of which I wrote the name of the recipient as a guide to my memory. When I delivered the message stick, which I did on all but two occasions, I was able to explain to the recipient the significance of the marks on the message stick by referring to my notes.

(1) YIRRKALLA

While the expedition party was at Yirrkalla we received a visit from a white 211
man who, according to the aborigines, had bought their seed pearls and tortoise- 202
shell, but had not paid for them. A number of aborigines carved message sticks, 439
which they delivered to the visitor by hand to remind him of his debt. At the same time, the aborigines added a request for a number of items of clothing and luxuries in the forlorn hope that some day he might send them along. Before the message sticks were delivered, I was able to make rubbings of two, one from *Bununga*, Fig. 66C, and another from *Mungarani*, Fig. 67C, E.

(a) SECULAR MESSAGE STICKS

On Fig. 66C, which is *Bununga's* message stick, the upper three lines, *a*, 211
represent three boxes of matches, *b*, two blankets, and *c*, singlets. Triangle *e* 532*
refers to the nineteen shillings debt owing to *Bununga* for some time; *d* is a request for shirts, *m* for two fishing lines, *n* for calico, and *o* for tobacco.

Fig. 67E is *Mungarani's* message stick to the same white man. The central dot, *a*, is the white man, the recipient of the message stick. The triangle *b* is a request for a towel, *c*, *c*, *c* for loin cloths, *d* a new belt, *e* a knife, *f* a mirror, *g* razor blades, *h* two fishing lines, *j* trousers, *k* shirt, *l* hair comb, and *m* hair oil.

On the reverse side, Fig. 67C, the upper cross-hatched carving is pure decoration. The line *n* is the sender, *Mungarani*. The triangles, *o*, refer to the money owing to him for seed pearls and tortoise-shell; *p* is a request for a bag of flour, *q* for sugar, *r* for sticks of tobacco. *Mungarani* referred to *s* as the 'asking' line.[48]

Figure 66E, F illustrates a message stick sent by *Wondjuk* at Yirrkalla to his partner, *Baramula*, in the ceremonial exchange cycle of Arnhem Land.[49]

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[48] This 'asking' symbol is also engraved on Fig. 67C, *s*, *t*, *u*, *w*, *x*, *z*.

[49] Donald Thomson (1949) has given us a full description of the economic structure and ceremonial exchange system of Arnhem Land. The stone headed spears, *nambi*, asked for by *Wondjuk* travel only in a northerly direction, while the articles from Yirrkalla, i.e. stone axes, ceremonial bags and leather ornaments, move in the opposite direction. The types of articles and their direction of travel are indicated in Fig. 2 of Thomson's book. [439]

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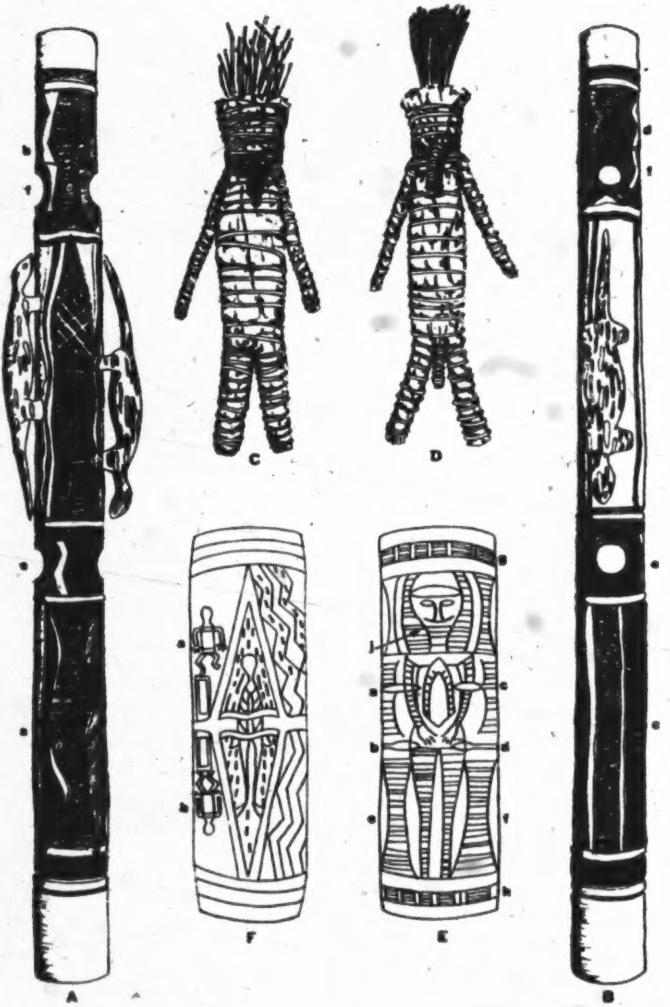

Rosemary Dunnett

FIG. 65. Ceremonial message sticks and bark figures, Yirrkalla

A, B The night-bird, karawak, and the opossum, marungo C, D Bunbulama and Wuluwait
E, F The man, Buma-buma

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

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Wondjuk is asking his trade partner, *Baramala* (who lives near the famous flint quarries of Nilipidji, west of Blue Mud Bay) to send him a number of articles, including several bundles of stone-headed spears. This bundle of spears will be repaid, in turn, by articles which *Wondjuk* will collect in the Yirrkalla area.

The elongated designs, *a*, on the bottom of the obverse and the reverse side of Fig. 66E, F is a request to *Baramala* to send two bundles of stone-headed spears to *Wondjuk*; *c* refers to a ceremonial string, *purukuku*, of the *dua* moiety, in which white eagle down is twisted during manufacture, and *d*, a carrying-basket for *Wondjuk's* wife. The short parallel lines on either side are decorations only.

Figure 66D is a message stick which *Mauwulan*, one of my informants, asked a member of the expedition to deliver to a white man who had visited Yirrkalla previously. The message stick was a reminder to the recipient about a number of articles he had promised to send to *Mauwulan* and his wife.

The upper part of the message stick dealt largely with the requirements of *Mauwulan's* wife. The lines *a* are a request for two skirts, *b* two singlets, *c* a hair comb, *d* a mirror, and *e* a bottle of hair oil; *f* is *Mauwulan's* request for a turtle rope, and *p* for many fish-hooks.

On the lower panel, *Mauwulan* is asking at *g* for much tobacco, at *h* for a mirror, *o* a hair comb, *r* a knife, *j* a pair of trousers, *m* two short trousers, and *n* a belt. The four crescent shapes indicate the many moons since the articles were promised.

Figure 66G, H is a message stick I carried from *Wondjuk* at Yirrkalla to *Buramin* in Darwin.

One side of the message stick, Fig. 66H, dealt with goods required by *Wondjuk*; the other, Fig. 66G, those required by his wife. On Fig. 66H, *a* is a request for a mirror, *b* for hair oil, *c* long trousers, *d* a shirt, the multiple lines, *e*, on the left, many sticks of tobacco, and *f*, a number of blankets.

On Fig. 66G, *m* is a request for a skirt for *Wondjuk's* wife, *n* for calico, and *o* for a belt.

Fig. 67D, G illustrates a message stick *Matarman*, at Yirrkalla, asked me to deliver to his brother, *Malarapan*, in Darwin.

On Fig. 67D is the figure of *Malarapan*, the recipient. The meanings of the various lines are: *a*, two white shirts; *b*, two khaki shirts; *c*, one blue coat; *d*, two belts; *e*, two knives; *f*, two khaki shorts; *g*, two long white trousers; and *h*, a hat. The border of short lines is decoration.

The symbols on Fig. 67G (on which the figure of *Matarman*, the sender, is engraved) indicate the goods required by *Matarman's* wife: *j*, two bottles of hair oil; *k*, two combs; *l*, a looking-glass; *m*, two small belts; *n*, two dresses; *o*, a singlet; *p*, two belts, white; *q*, two more small belts; *r*, a pair of scissors. The zigzag lines, *s*, *t*, *u*, *w*, *x*, *z*, are 'asking' marks.

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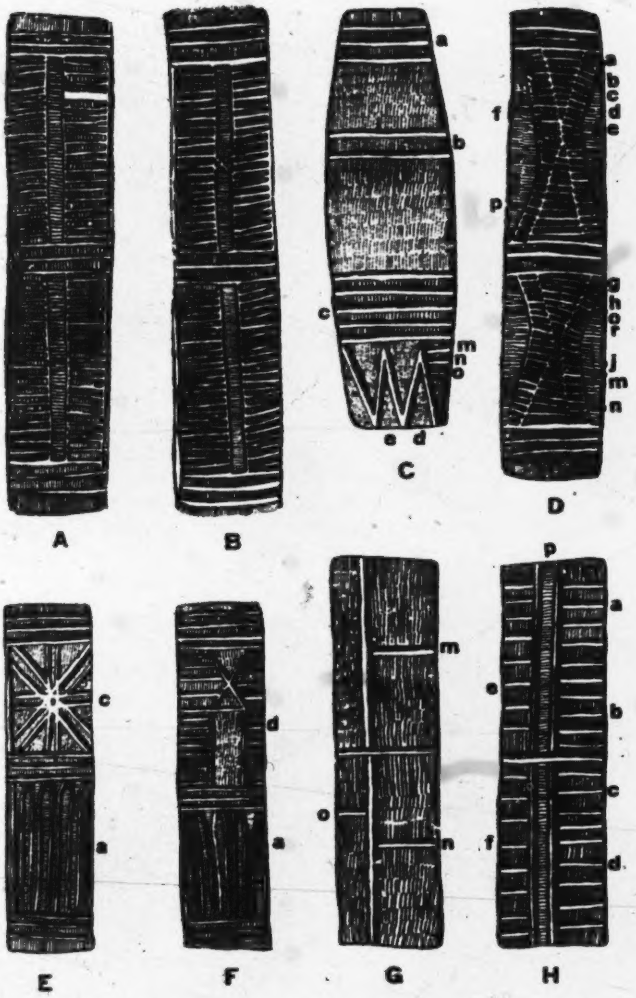
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H

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FIG. 66. Secular message sticks, Yirrkalla

A, B Unidentified C Burunga D Mauwulan E, F, G, H Wondjuk

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

Three of the message sticks from Yirrkalla were unidentified, Fig. 68C, D, Fig. 66A, B, and Fig. 67A, F. They are included to indicate additional designs employed on the message sticks of that locality. 211 532*

(b) CEREMONIAL MESSAGE STICKS

The Man, Buma-buma, of Trial Bay

At Wialpa, Trial Bay,[50] during mythical times, an old *dua* man, *Bouka-baluwuru*, instructed his son, *Buma-buma*, to go to an adjacent group of aborigines and bring back with him two boys who were due to be circumcised. When *Buma-buma* reached the distant camp he demanded, in the name of his father, two girls instead of two boys. Though the old men agreed to the demand, they were somewhat suspicious of the unusual request. On nearing Wialpa, *Buma-buma*, hiding the girls in the jungle, told his father that the old men of the distant people wanted at least another year before their youths were ready for circumcision. The father, who did not believe that story, demanded more and further more details, until *Buma-buma* was forced to admit he had brought girls instead of boys. The men, and especially the father, were so enraged over *Buma-buma's* disobedience and its consequent disgrace that they speared the young man to death. After the burial rituals of *Buma-buma*, the men at Wialpa were so ashamed of his actions that they changed themselves into water-birds, which still live in the nearby fresh-water swamps. 211 532* 773*

At the present time the ceremonial message stick, on which the figure of *Buma-buma* is engraved, is sent to a group of aborigines who have a boy ready for circumcision.[51] Although the designs on the stick refer specifically to the death and burial of *Buma-buma*, and not to circumcision, the myth of *Buma-buma's* disobedience and punishment is so well known that the significance of the message stick is understood. [202] [304]

Figure 65E is the obverse side and Fig. 65F the reverse. On Fig. 65E the dead body of *Buma-buma*, wrapped for burial, occupies the central position. The spears, which had been thrust into his side, are at *a, b, c, d*. The group of lines, *e*, are *dua* men and *f*, *jiritja* men, who are taking part in the burial rituals. The short lines, *g*, at the top of the message stick are the *jiritja* and *h*, at the bottom, the *dua* men, who are chanting the songs of burial. All these men have since been changed into water-birds. The designs on panel *j* refer to the paper-bark wrapping of the corpse.

The reverse side, Fig. 65F, shows *Buma-buma* when the decomposition is complete and the people have assembled to transfer his bones to the temporary bark coffin. The main lozenge-shaped design is the paper-bark wrapping round the corpse, which is now a skeleton. On the left at *a* is a *dua* man, *Biribirit*, with a bark coffin at his feet, and at *b* a *jiritja* man, also standing on a bark

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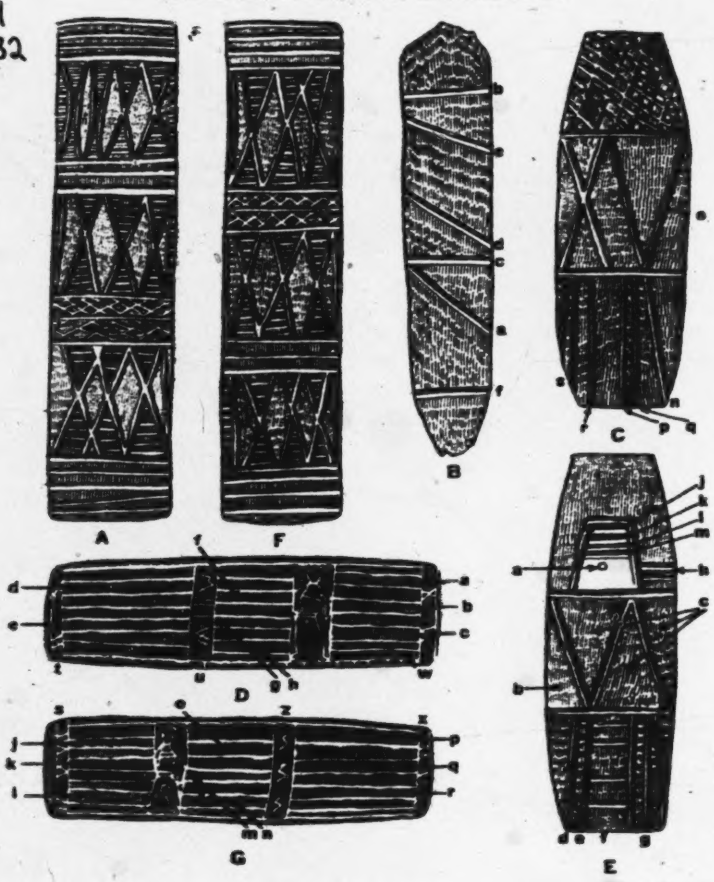
[50] Map, Fig. 57.

[51] In north-eastern Arnhem Land the boys are circumcised when they are about eight years of age. [illegible]

[text continues on p. 473]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Jean Truran

FIG. 67. Secular message sticks, Yirrkalla

A, F Unidentified B Miljirina C, E Mungaraui D, G Mataman coffin. The short lines around the skeleton are the maggots deserting the body and burying themselves in the ground to pupate. The two men are now water-birds; the coffins, the paper-bark wrappings of the corpse and the body of *Buma-buma* are natural features at Wialpa. 211 532* 773*

The Night-bird, Karawak, and the Opossum, Marungo

During creation times the night-bird, *karawak*, flew from Milingimbi to a hollow tree at Cape Shield, Blue Mud Bay, so that he could talk to the opossum, *marungo*, who lived in it.[52]

At specified times, the aborigines associated with the night-bird and opossum totems carve a stick, similar to that illustrated on Fig. 65A, B, and send it to the clan and language groups on whose territory *karawak* rested on his way to Cape Shield. The presentation of this stick is an invitation to attend the ceremonies at a specified time and place.[53] [202]

Figure 65A,-B represents the hollow tree at Cape Shield on the top of which, every night, the night-bird and the opossum talk to each other. The day-time camp of the opossum is represented at *e*, *e*, and the night camp at *f*, *f*.

On Fig. 65A, the opossum on the left is ascending the tree at nightfall to keep his companion company, and on the right he is descending to sleep through the hours of daylight. The designs at *a*, *b*, *c* and *d* symbolize water-lilies which grow in the swamps near the totemic tree, and the short lines at the bottom of Fig. 65B, the scratches made by the opossum in the bark of the totemic tree as he climbs up and down.[54]

(2) OENPELLI

Figure 67B is a message stick an aboriginal, *Miljirina*, at Oenpelli asked me to deliver to his friend, *Jakinuramilja*, in Darwin. 171

The line *a* is *Miljirina*, the sender of the stick, and the line *b* the recipient, *Jakinuramilja*; *c* is *Tundara*, one of *Miljirina's* wives, and *d*, another wife, called *Marinja*. The lines *e* and *f* each represent a bottle of tobacco. *Miljirina* wanted his friend, *Jakinuramilja*, to induce his two wives, *Tundara* and *Marinja*, to come back to him at Oenpelli; he also wanted two bottles of tobacco.[55]

Figure 68E is the message stick I carried from an aboriginal, *Kainarani*, at Oenpelli to his son, *Pultadi*, in Darwin. The sender was distressed because his son had been drinking heavily, and was urging him to return to his father and

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[52] For the complete myth, see p. 362.

[53] Warner (1937), p. 362, mentions that at Milingimbi similar *garrawak* message sticks are carried to both *dua* and *jiritja* groups notifying them that the *narra* rituals are about to start.

[54] The symbolism employed on the bark painting of the night-bird and the opossum, Pl. 115E, is similar to that used on the message stick.

[55] Tobacco was traded in small bottles. When we were at Yirrkalla the mission authorities at southern Groote Eylandt discontinued the issue of tobacco. After that prohibition, there was a regular trade in bottles of tobacco between the expedition camp and the Groote Eylandt Mission. The tobacco followed the same lines as in the ceremonial trade cycle described by Thomson (1949). [439 797 279]

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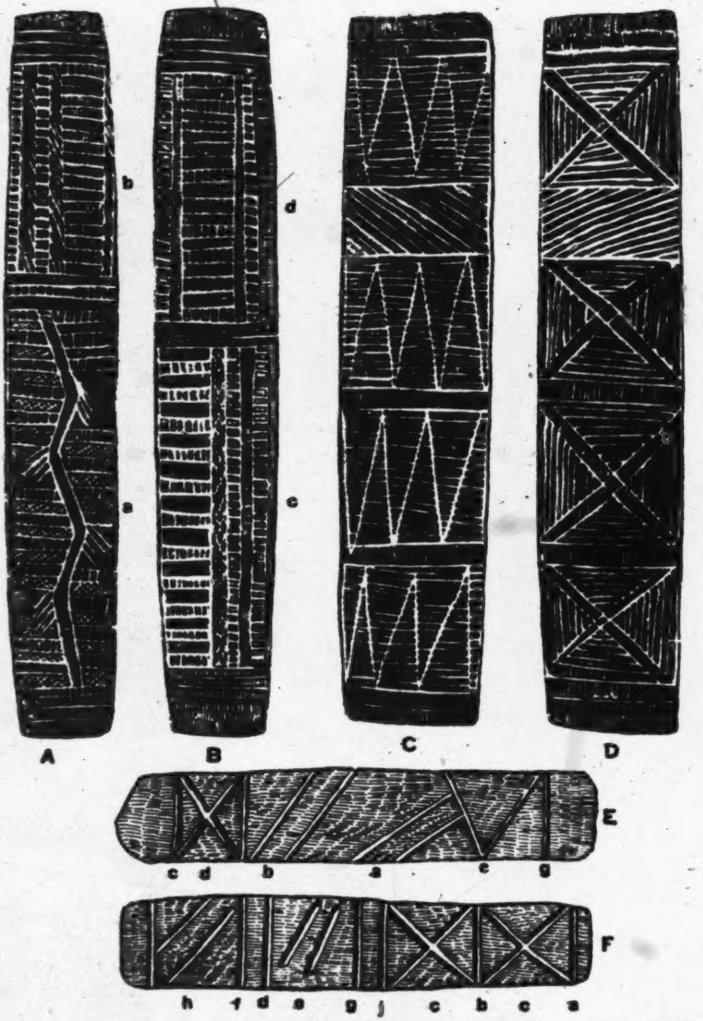
b
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c
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c d b a e g
F
h f d e g j c b c a

Fig. 68. Message sticks, Yirrkalla and Oenpelli *Jean Truran*

A, B Ceremonial, Djunkgao C, D Unidentified E Kainarani F Miljirina mother. The two marks, *a*, referred to the somewhat tragic message I was asked to deliver, and the two marks, *b*, to the sorrowing mother and father. The son was also asked to send, or bring, other supplies, *c* being a request for tobacco, the crossed diagonal lines, *d*, for two blankets, the triangle *e* for sugar, and *g* for a mosquito net.

Figure 68F is a message stick I carried from *Miljirina* at Oenpelli to a number of aborigines at Darwin, chief among them being *Tjakulima*. Line *a* is a request from *Miljirina* to *Tjakulima* to send out food because he wished to go to Goulburn Island; *b* is a member of the staff of Native Affairs in Darwin, and *c*, *c* (the crosses) requests to that officer to send *Miljirina*'s wife, *Tundara*, back to Oenpelli; *d* is *Wiang*, *e* two sticks of tobacco, *f* an aboriginal, *Nautjin*, *g* another aboriginal, *Miaun*, and *h*, more sticks of tobacco which *Miljirina* wanted the men to send to him at Oenpelli.

PART SIX

ASTRONOMY

[P. 477]
[P. 476 contains no text]

6

ASTRONOMY

THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES, whose knowledge of the night sky is far greater than that of most white men, have surrounded the heavenly bodies with a maze of stories. 821 114

Although the writers of the last century, Smyth,[1] Squires,[2] Ridley[3] and others, gathered much information about aboriginal astronomy, few later writers have done so. Maegraith[4] has published a detailed and valuable description of the astronomy of the Aranda and Luritja tribes of Central Australia; Mountford[5] has recorded a myth of Orion and the Pleiades from the Adnjamatana tribe of South Australia, and later,[6] more detailed information on the astronomy of the Pitjendadjara tribe of western Central Australia.

In Arnhem Land the aboriginal men appeared to have an extensive knowledge of the major stars, the planets and some of the inconspicuous star groups.[7] They have depicted, on sheets of bark, many of the myths relating to these heavenly bodies. Although there are some resemblances between the myths of Milingimbi and Yirrkalla, those of Oenpelli, Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla show wide differences. [171]

1. GROOTE EYLANDT

The Constellation of the Crab, Unwala

The aboriginal constellation of the crab, *Unwala*, an unmarried sky-man living by himself, is a group of small stars at the head of Hydra. This constellation is an example of how small, inconspicuous star groups form part of the aboriginal astronomy, while adjacent first and second magnitude stars, like Procyon and Regulus, are apparently disregarded. 171

Plate 150A is the painting of the mud crab, *Unwala*. It is, in fact, almost a duplicate of the design on Pl. 9B, which deals with the ancestral crabs at Bickerton Island.

The Milky Way

The Groote Eylandt aborigines look upon the Milky Way, *ataluma*, as a sky river in whose waters are many large fish and a multitude of water-lily bulbs. It is from this river that the star-people gather their food. All the stars in the section of the Milky Way west of a line drawn between the Southern Cross and

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[1] Smyth (1878), pp. 431-4.
[2] Squires (n.d.), pp. 14-61.
[3] Ridley (1875), pp. 141-2.
[4] Maegraith (1932), pp. 19-26.
[5] Mountford (1939), pp. 103-4.
[6] Mountford (1948), pp. 151-7.
[7] Maegraith (1932), p. 20, noticed the same characteristics among the aborigines of Central Australia.

[P.478 contains no Text]

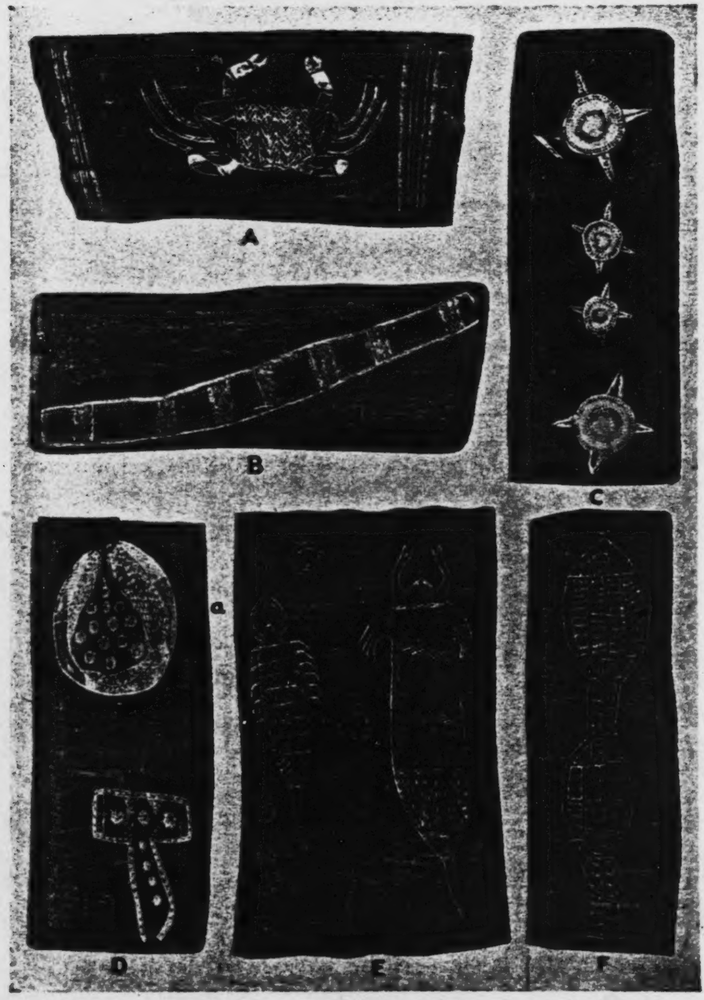

PLATE 150. Bark paintings, astronomical, Groote Eylandt

A The Crab B The Milky Way C Venus, Jupiter and their children
D Orion and the Pleiades E The Scorpions F The Sun-woman

the Great Bear, Ursa Major, belong to the *wirinikapara* moiety[8] and those to the east to the *oranikapara* moiety. This observation was made at Groote Eylandt on 15 May 1948.

Plate 150B is a simple painting of the Milky Way. The transverse chevron patterns indicate breaks in the galaxy, and the dots, the myriads of stars that make up this heavenly spectacle. The aborigines believe the small stars of the Milky Way are the water-lily bulbs.

Venus and Jupiter, with Their Two Children

Venus, *Barnimbida*,[9] the man, and Jupiter, *Duwarawara*, the woman, have two children, *Dugina-nutjana*, who are stars in the 'sting' of Scorpio, Lambda and Upsilon. The two children, *Dugina-nutjana*, are considered to be 'friends' of the south-east wind, *mamariga*, for when these two stars of Scorpio appear in the evening sky toward the end of April the *mamariga* is blowing at its full strength. The children are not associated with the other prevailing winds, the north-west, *bara*, or the north-east, *timbura*.

Plate 150C is a simple painting of the star family of *Barnimbida*. The star on the top is the man, *Barnimbida*, and that on the bottom the woman, *Duwarawara*. The two stars in between are the children, *Dugina-nutjana*.

The Scorpions, Miaipra-pria

The constellation of the scorpions, *Miaipra-pria*, is made up of a number of small stars of the northern sky in the constellation of the Lynx. The *Miaipra-pria* are old childless star-people, who hunt over the sky or fish in the Milky Way for food, bringing it back to cook over their own fires, the two large stars in the constellation.

In Pl. 150E the figure on the right is the man, and that on the left, the woman. The two circles between them are the fires (unidentified bright stars) at which they cook their food.

The Sun-woman, Mamoura

The sun, being a woman, occupies a minor place in the myths of the Australian aborigines. *Mamoura*, the sun-woman, and *Wanum-gurupa*, her husband, both of whom were old and feeble, once lived at Mamoura-madja (sun-place), in south-eastern Groote Eylandt. When these ancestral people died, their bodies were transformed into two low rocks on the seashore.

Several points suggest that the sun-woman, *Mamoura*, and the female turtle, *Imoraka*, are identical. The totemic rocks of the sun-man and sun-woman at Mamoura-madja are also the ancestral bodies of the male and female green

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[8] It is interesting to note that even the heavenly bodies are grouped according to the moiety laws.

[9] Warner (1937), p. 524, who calls the evening star *barnumbir*, relates a myth about this star and the *dua* aborigines' 'heaven'. Most likely the Groote Eylandt *barnimbida* is associated with the same myth. See also Milingimbi and Yirrkalla myths relating to *barnumbir*, p. 327, p. 328.

|7| turtles, *Imoruka*, p. 77. Both the song associated with the sun-woman and that belonging to the turtle (p. 79) deal with the activities of the turtle, the first describing the turtle entering and leaving the water, the second, the female turtle coming on shore and laying her eggs in the sand. The sun is looked upon as a female turtle.

My informants stated that the following song belonged to the sun-woman, *Mamoura*. Nevertheless, it describes the turtle leaving and entering the water. On account of the close association between the sun and the turtle it is possible that the song also refers to the rising and setting of the sun over the sea.

THE SONG

Imoruka	*ibirika*	*nitaninda*	*nabu-tjuna*
turtle	goes along	shore	goes under water
	nanbi-tjuna	*manbi-rinka*	
	comes out of water	re-enters water	

In Pl. 150F the upper turtle-like figure is the elderly sun-woman, *Mamoura*, and the lower one, her husband, *Wanum-gurupa*. The rectangles in the design were described as the 'roads' by which the sun enters the water.

The Constellation of Orion and the Pleiades

Orion and the Pleiades are linked in the astronomical myths. More often than not, Orion is a man or group of men, and the Pleiades their wives. This is the belief of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt. The major stars in the constellation of Orion are three fishermen, the *Burum-burum-runja*, and the Pleiades, their wives, the *Wutarinja*. Three of the bark paintings illustrate this myth.

In Pl. 151E the fishermen, *Burum-burum-runja*, are the three stars (Orion's belt) in the rectangle, and the smaller dots, their children. The extension (Orion's sword) in the lower left-hand corner symbolizes the line of fish the celestial fishermen caught in the creek, *ataluma* (Milky Way). The dots within the circle on the lower right are the wives, *Wutarinja* (the Pleiades).

The myth of the three fishermen, *Burum-burum-runja*, is shown differently in Pl. 151A. Here the fishermen are the three large circles with projections on their periphery. Each man has caught two fish. These are hanging from the lower edge of the bottom circle. As in the other bark paintings of Orion, the three stars representing the men are the belt of Orion, and the fish, the three stars of the sword of Orion. To the right of the constellation is the fire, *tatalanaitjuna*, at which the men cook the fish. The circular design to the right is the fire (Bellatrix), the short, more or less straight lines, *a*, leading towards the lower right-hand edge, the flames of the fire and the longer curving lines, *b*, the smoke. The flames and the smoke are nearby parts of the Milky Way. The wives of the men, i.e. the Pleiades, are not shown in this painting.

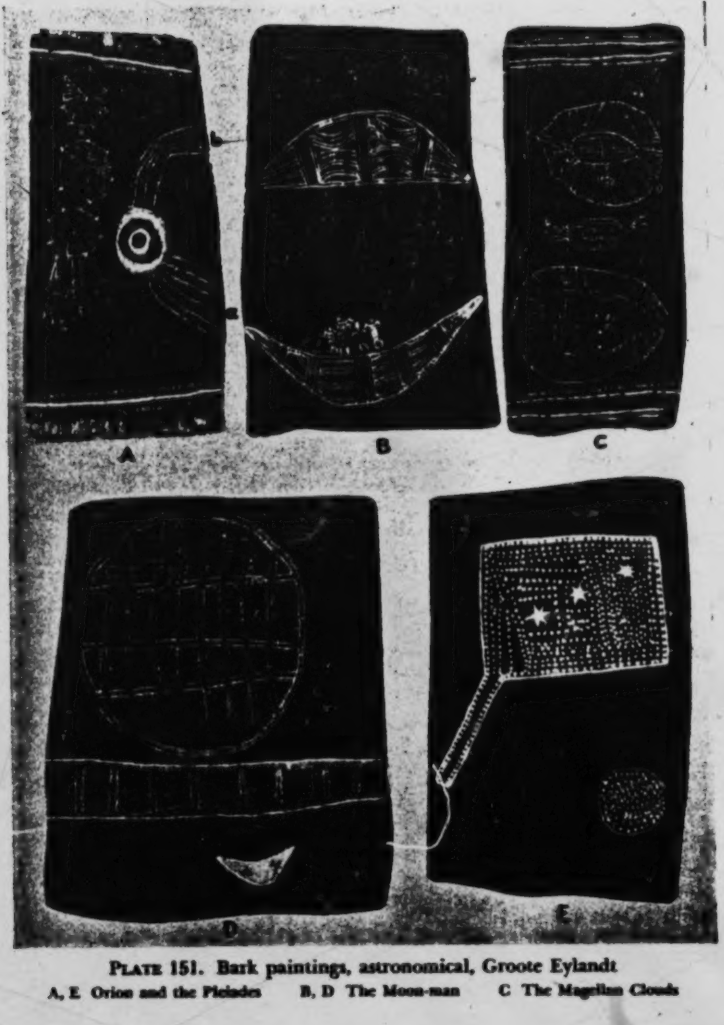

PLATE 151. Bark paintings, astronomical, Groote Eylandt

A, E Orion and the Pleiades B, D The Moon-man C The Magellan Clouds

Plate 150D depicts the three fishermen, *Burum-burum-runja*, and their wives, *Wutarinja*, in another form. The three stars (Orion's belt) in the upper part of the T-shaped design are the fishermen. The first upper star in the vertical limb of the T (the sword of Orion) is the fire at which the men cook their fish. The second and fourth stars are parrot-fish and the third a skate. Above, at *a*, are the wives of the celestial fishermen seated within their circular grass hut.[10]

The Moon, Jumauria

In the early days of the world the moon, *Jumauria*, had no wife, and so was lonely. As he was travelling across the sky one night he heard a pounding noise and looking down saw the woman, *Dunani-admina*, seated with her family by their camp-fire, preparing food for the evening meal. Quickly *Jumauria* came to earth and, capturing the woman and her family, took them with him into the moon. They have remained there ever since and can be seen on the face of the moon any clear night, the mother, her three children and the moon trees, *tjamba*, under which they shelter.

The aborigines have established a relationship between the tides and the moon. They believe that when the tides are high, the water runs into the moon and fills it up. Then the moon becomes fat and round. When the tides are low the water runs out of the moon, leaving it thin and small. When I asked my informants why, although the tides were high at the new moon, the moon itself was still thin they explained that this was not so. Although only a small part of the moon was shining (like pearl shell), the dark body of the moon could be seen, made fat by the water which flowed into it from the high tide.

Plate 151B pictures *Jumauria*, the moon-man, with his wife and family. The upper design is the full moon, although only half the disc is shown. The lower is the new moon with *Dunani-admina*, the moon-man's wife, and her two children standing on its upper edge. The moon trees, *tjamba*, are not shown.

In Pl. 151D is the circular disc of the moon with a series of lines on the lower edge indicating the water running into the moon from the sea, the transverse band across the bark sheet. The new moon is shown on the lower edge as a crescent.

The Magellan Clouds

The Magellan Clouds are the camps of an old man and woman, known as the *Jukara*, who are so feeble that they cannot gather their own food. The other star-people spear the fish in the waters of the sky river, *ataluma*, gather the water-lily bulbs from its shallow reaches and take them to the *Jukara*, who cook the food at their own fire.

The lower design in Pl. 151C, the greater Magellan Cloud, is the camp of the old man, *Jukara*. The upper design, the lesser Cloud, is the camp of the woman. The oval between the camps is the fire at which the *Jukara* cook their food. This is a star called *Angnura*, probably Achernar. The details of the fire are of some interest. The central oval is the fire and the lines to the right, the burning logs. The outer oval with the curving lines right and left, which my informants said was a circle of small stars, is the smoke of the camp-fire. 171

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[10] Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXX.

The Southern Cross, the Pointers and the Coal Sack

The Southern Cross, the Pointers and the Coal Sack form an aboriginal constellation. The Coal Sack was once a large fish, *alakitja*, which, while swimming in the waters of the celestial stream, the Milky Way, was speared by the two brothers, *Wanamoumitja* (Alpha and Beta Crucis), and dragged to the bank. The brothers divided the fish and cooked it, each at his own fire. Those fires are the remaining two stars of the Southern Cross, Delta and Gamma Crucis.

Near the brothers are two of their friends, the *Meirindilja*, who, at the time the fish was captured, had just returned from a hunt. The *Meirindilja* are sitting at their own camp-fire, chanting a song and beating their boomerangs together to mark the time. These men are the Pointers, Alpha and Beta Centauri.

Plate 152E shows the two brothers, the *Wanamoumitja*, spearing the fish, *alakitja*. The fires at which the fish was cooked are two white discs near the tail. This painting represents the four stars of the Cross and the Coal Sack.

Plate 152B pictures the two men, *Meirindilja*. The two groups of three boomerangs, one group on either side of the *Meirindilja*, were made by them before they went hunting. The transverse lines on the chests of the men are body scars and those across their hips the belt from which hangs their pubic tassel.

In Pl. 152C the whole constellation is painted diagrammatically. On the left-hand side the men, *Meirindilja*, indicated as stars, are shown with their boomerangs between them. The discs in the middle of the painting are the two cooking fires. On the right is the fish, *alakitja*, with the stars above and below representing the brothers *Wanamoumitja*.

W. E. Harney, who collected the terrestrial story of the rock cod and the men of the Southern Cross some years previous to our visit, has provided me with the following particulars.

A rock cod once lived under a projecting boulder in a lagoon some miles south of Windana (Cape Barrow), Fig. 4. Two brothers who lived in the country often reached down when they were passing to feel how large the fish had grown, planning one day to kill and eat it.

There came a time, however, when the rock cod, which by then had grown into a very large fish, on feeling the hands of the men, caught hold of them, pulled the men under the water, drowned and swallowed them. Then, moving from the lagoon to the sea, thereby creating the Minnie Creek, the fish swam southward until it reached Weakaba, which is at the mouth of the present-day Roper River. After a short stay at Weakaba, the rock cod travelled in a westerly direction, creating the lower reaches of the Roper River on the way, until he met two rainbow-serpents who had just completed the upper part. The work

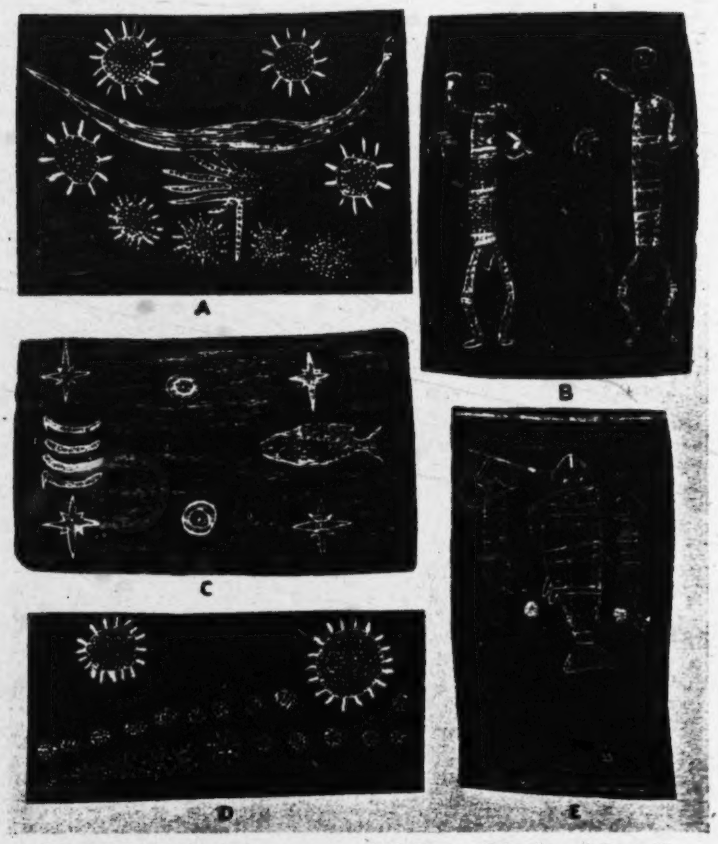

PLATE 152. Bark paintings, astronomical, Groote Eylandt and Oenpelli

A The Southern Cross, Oenpelli B The Pointers
C, E The Southern Cross, Groote Eylandt D Stars

of the cod being finished, he lived quietly in the river until two brothers of the dead men, called the *Wanamoumitja*, speared the rock cod and he died.

The body of the fish was transformed into a large boulder on the banks of the river, but his spirit went into the sky, swam along the Milky Way and came to rest at a place in the firmament known to the white men as the Coal Sack. The two brothers, *Wanamoumitja*, who killed the fish are now large stars near by.

2. OENPELLI

The Milky Way, Mungabou, and the Coal Sack, Munguiban

According to the aborigines of Oenpelli the Milky Way is a stream, *mungabou*, which flows across the sky. No fish live in its waters, or birds float on its surface. There is, however, a multitude of water-lily bulbs, the small stars, which are food for the sky-dwellers. The Coal Sack, *munguiban*, is looked upon as a large plum tree which, during the early 'rain-time', about late December, provides the celestial inhabitants with much fruit. These sky-dwellers are friendly people and often visit each other.

In Pl. 153B the diagonal line is the 'creek' of the sky, *mungabou*, and the adjacent stars, the sky-dwellers who live along its bank. In the upper right-hand corner is the great tree, *munguiban*, the Coal Sack.

The Morning Stars, Garakma

These unidentified morning stars are a celestial family, known as the *Garakma*, which can be seen in the morning sky during October. Like many other sky-dwellers, they live on the water-lily bulbs which grow in the water-course of the sky, *mungabou*, the Milky Way, and fruit from the tree *munguiban*, the Coal Sack.

On Pl. 152D the large star on the right is the man, *Garakma*, and the one on the left, his wife. The circles with enclosed dots are the girls, and the star designs on the lower left, the boys of the family. The children are called the *gingin*.

The Southern Cross

In the early days of the world a group of star-men, the *Nangurgal*, accompanied by their sons, went hunting and caught a large non-venomous snake. This they cooked and ate. After the *Nangurgal* had finished their meal their eyes became so bright that even people on earth could see them. They are now the stars of the Southern Cross.

In Pl. 152A the eyes of the *Nangurgal*, the Southern Cross, are the four larger stars, and those of their sons, the smaller stars. The crescent, once the snake, is the Coal Sack. Immediately below the crescent is the fire, *gunark*, an unidentified star, on which the *Nangurgal* cooked the snake. The projections are the logs on the fire.

The Walagugu and the Tjirupun

171 The Southern Cross, the Pointers and a number of adjacent small stars within that part of the Milky Way make up the aboriginal constellation of *Tjirupun*[11] and the *Walagugu*, with the respective families. *Tjirupun* lives with his numerous wives and children in a round grass hut, and the *Walagugu* camp in the open. These star-people live exclusively on the water-lily bulbs they collect in the nearby Milky Way.

The man, *Tjirupun*, is the large white circle in the centre of Pl. 155C, the remainder of the circles being his family, the larger his wives and the smaller his children. The four outer stars are the *Walagugu*, *a*, *a*, being the men and *b*, *b*, their wives. The parallel lines joining these stars to the main design are tracks made by the *Walagugu* as they travelled to and from the Milky Way in search of food.

None of the individual stars in this painting was specifically identified, but it seems likely that the *Walagugu* are the four stars of the Southern Cross and *Tjirupun* and his family the many stars in the nearby Milky Way.

3. MILINGIMBI

The Moon-man, Alinda

*773 At the time of creation the moon-man, *Alinda*, who lived at Tutula at the mouth of the Liverpool River,[12] had two wives, each of whom had borne him
821 a son. One day when the wives were out gathering food, *Alinda* sent the boys to catch some fish while he stayed in camp to complete a large carrying-bag he was making.

The youths did not catch any fish but, on a nearby lagoon, speared a whistling duck which, instead of taking back to their father as they should have done, they cooked and ate on the spot. On their return they told their father they had not caught any fish, but said nothing about the duck they had eaten. However, the moon-man was a shrewd old fellow and knew from the grease on the boys' hands that they had recently eaten flesh of some sort, so he said:

'If you haven't caught any food, how did you get that grease on your fingers?'

Although the lads denied having eaten anything, they could not explain their dirty hands.

After *Alinda* had berated them for both their greed and deceitfulness, the boys lay down in their camp and went to sleep. *Alinda*, seeing this and still angry over the behaviour of his sons, lifted them carefully and pushed them into his carrying-bag. Finding themselves imprisoned, the lads first screamed and kicked frantically, then confessed their misdeeds, promising that, if only their

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[11] This name is similar to that used by the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land for the constellation of Orion, p. 480.

[12] Map, Fig. 1.

773* 821 father would release them, they would always bring back any food they had caught. But the moon-man was adamant, and tying up the end of his carrying-bag and putting it on his shoulder, loaded it into his canoe and, paddling until almost out of sight of land, threw the bag overboard.

While all this was going on the wives of *Alinda* were digging yams in the jungle. On reaching camp in the late afternoon they saw *Alinda* sitting in his bark hut, but there was no sign of their sons. They asked *Alinda* where they had gone and he replied gruffly that they were out hunting and would not be back that evening. When further questioning brought only evasive answers the wives became suspicious.

Waiting until their husband was asleep, the women, by following the tracks of both their sons and *Alinda*, soon found out what had happened; they learned that the boys, unsuccessful in their fishing, had caught and eaten a whistling duck, carefully hiding the bones in the grass; then they had returned to camp but, as far as the women could see, had not left it again. They also saw the deep tracks of *Alinda*, indicating he was carrying a heavy load, marks where he had launched his canoe and others where he had beached it again, returning with light tracks to his hut. From this evidence the women deduced that *Alinda* had taken their sons out in his canoe and drowned them.

In their anger the wives of *Alinda* set fire to the hut in which their husband was sleeping, rejoicing as they saw him die in great pain amid the burning logs and bark. But even as they watched, the women saw the dead body of *Alinda* come to life, change into a thin crescent, grow into a large silvery sphere, like the moon of today, and climb to the top of a high tree. From that lofty position the moon-man spoke to everyone, to the fish, the birds, the animals and to man.

'I have decreed,' said he, 'that from this time onward the whole of creation will die, and once dead, will never live again. I and I alone, except for three days each month, will live forever.'

Birima, of the fish-people, objected strongly to this decree, but after much argument was finally silenced.

Since that time it has been as the moon decreed. *Alinda* dies every month for three days, comes to life, grows progressively larger for a fortnight, then sickens and dies again. But the rest of creation, once dead, remain dead forever. At full moon, the aborigines will point out a mark across his middle, the scar from the burn which he received so long ago at the hands of his wives.

532* 773* 821 In Pl. 153A is the pictorial representation of the moon myth. The two human figures on the lower left are the sons of *Alinda* whom he had drowned for their misdeeds. The rectangular design toward the upper right is the grass carrying-bag in which the moon-man imprisoned his sons. The rectangle (upper left) represents the bark hut where *Alinda* was burned to death. The black circle is the moon, the parallel lines in the middle section, the flames of the fire, and the curving lines at the top of the hut, the smoke. The snake-like figures on

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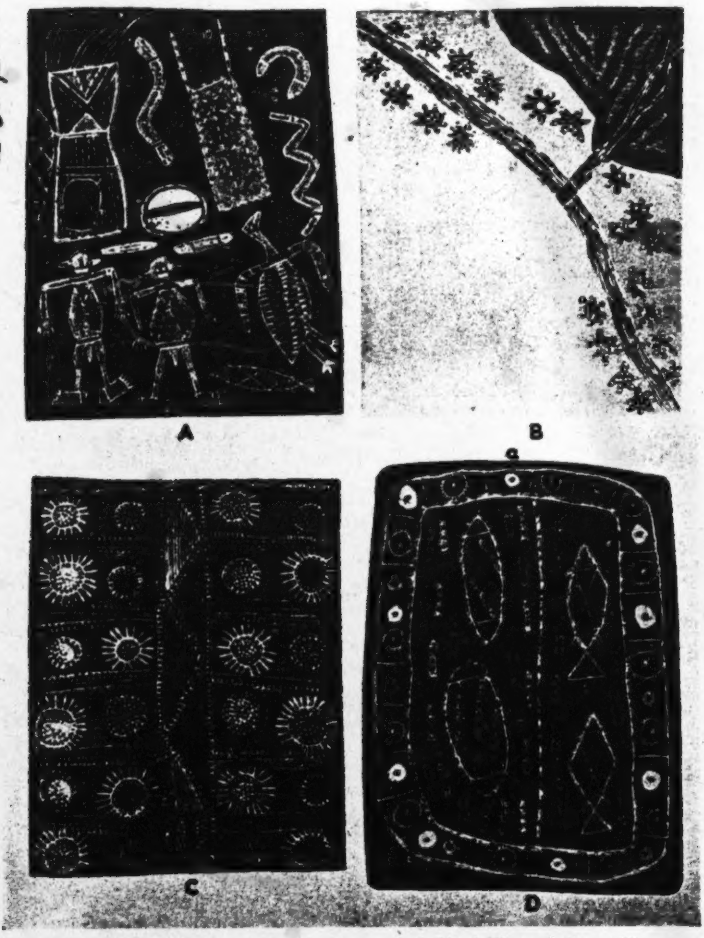

PLATE 155. Bark paintings, astronomical, Yirrkalla and Oenpelli

A The Moon-man B The Milky Way and Coal Sack, Oenpelli
C The Milky Way, Milingimbi D The opossum-man, Kapali

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either side of the carrying-bag of *Alinda* are yams the women collected. On the lower right is the whistling duck which the boys caught and ate. One of the two fish-brothers, *Birima*, is on the lower right and the other to the left of the burning hut. *Alinda* is shown on the upper right as a crescent, the new moon, and in the centre, the full moon, as a white circle with a black mark across it, symbolic of the burn he received.

The Milky Way

The aborigines of Milingimbi, as elsewhere in Arnhem Land, look upon the Milky Way as a celestial stream from which the sky people gather their food.

Plate 153C is a much conventionalized picture of the Milky Way. The central transverse design, with the zigzag line passing from end to end, is the main portion of the Milky Way, while the rectangles on each side are either isolated portions of the galaxy or branches of it. The circles with radiating lines are some of the bright stars within the Milky Way. The artist explained that the transverse design also represented the main stream of the heavens; the rectangles, branches and backwaters of that stream; and the stars, large fish and turtles living in it.

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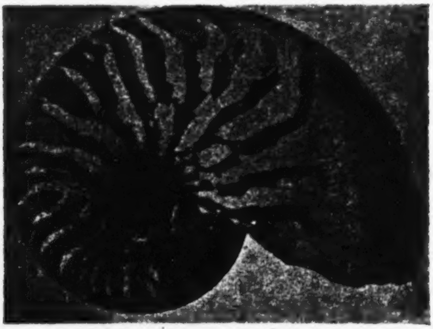

PLATE 154. The pearly nautilus

The Opossum-man, Kapali

During the early days of the world an old opossum-man, *Kapali*, his wives, two crow-women, *Tjakara* and *Wapanpri*, with their brother, *Inua*, lived on the sea coast south of Elcho Island.[13]

At the time the story opens old *Kapali*, having had a quarrel with his wives, paddled to Elcho Island, leaving the women and their brother behind in the

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[13] Map, Fig. 1.

*532 *773 *821 camp. As food was getting scarce in the jungle, the three crow-people built a fish-trap at the mouth of a nearby stream, which one of them visited every morning, returning with their baskets full of a fish called *laimon*. These they would cook and eat, littering the ground around them with discarded vertebrae.

When the old opossum-man returned from Elcho Island, tired from his long journey in the canoe, he asked his wives for something to eat, but they refused, saying rudely that if he wanted food he had better get some for himself. *Kapali*, after abusing the women for their rudeness, sat down beside his fire to warm himself and went to sleep. On seeing this the women, scooping up the hot coals and burning wood from the campfire, threw them over old *Kapali*. Screaming, the old man rushed into the sea to ease the pain, while the women, realizing that vengeance awaited them, hid themselves in the jungle.

Inua was at the fish-trap when he heard the commotion and cries of pain. Guessing what was wrong and not wishing to be involved in a domestic quarrel, he ran back to camp, joined the discarded fish vertebrae end on end to make a long ladder and climbed into the sky, pulling the ladder up after him so that no one could follow.

The opossum-man, having recovered somewhat from his wounds, went to his relatives, the fish-people, and told them about the injuries he had received at the hands of his wives, the crow-women. The mullet, the barramundi and the cat-fish men were so angry over the ill-treatment of their relative that they formed themselves into an avenging party, surrounded the camp of the women, speared them to death and buried them in the jungle. Next day, when the crow-people called on a visit, they could not find the women until a closer search revealed evidence of the avenging party and the bodies of the murdered women.

When *Inua* first heard about the death of his sisters, he would not believe that *Kapali* would have allowed an avenging party to kill his wives when a good beating would have been quite as effective. But after the crow-people had told *Inua* what they had seen, the broken spears, the blood-stained ground and the dead bodies, he was convinced. So, descending to earth on his ladder of fish bones, he brought his sisters to life, carried them into the sky and changed them to stars.

From that day so long ago the brother and the two sisters have remained in the sky, living happily on the banks of the Milky Way. Every day they go out collecting water-lily bulbs and catching fish, and every night sit quietly among the stars, safe from the vengeance of *Kapali*, the old opossum-man.

The whole design of Pl. 153D represents the stars in the southern portion of the Milky Way adjacent to the constellations of Lupus and Scorpio, those in the outer border being the larger ones. The fish on the lower right is the barramundi, and the one above, the mullet, both of whom assisted in the killing of the two women. The oval designs on the left are baskets used by the women to carry

fish from the trap to the camp. These are now isolated parts of the Milky Way, 532*
near the constellation of Argo. Fish-bones scattered within the design, once 773*
thrown away by *Inua* and his sisters, are small stars in the Milky Way, and the
vertical dotted line across the middle, the track between the camp and fish-trap. 821
The white star at *a* is the brother, *Inua*, and those at *b* and *c* the two wives of
Kapali. These three stars form the aboriginal constellation of *Kainja*.

Orion and the Pleiades

All the stars Orion, the Hyades, the Pleiades, those between these constellations and many others stretching far into the northern and southern sky are included in the aboriginal constellation of *Tjilulpuna*. This constellation, known also as the 'canoe stars', covers a large area of the evening sky during the wet season, from December until March. Every night during that time the men, *Tjilulpuna*, paddle their canoe along the 'river' (Milky Way), fishing as they go.

In this attractive painting, Pl. 155A, the main design is the canoe, the projections at the bow and stern being the small platforms on which the aborigines stand to spear fish. The paddles are the long lines of stars stretching far out to the north and the south. They include, on one side, some of the stars of the Gemini, and on the other side, of Eridinus. The three stars at the left-hand end of the canoe (the belt of Orion) are the three men, *Tjilulpuna*; those at the other end of the canoe (the Pleiades) are their wives. The fish within the canoe is the constellation of the Hyades. The star groups representing the fish in the sea were not identified, but are most likely part of the Milky Way.

1. YIRRKALLA

The Moon-man, Alinda

In creation times the moon-man, *Alinda*, and the parrot-fish man, *Dirima*, were always disagreeing over some trivial matter. During one unusually violent quarrel, each picked up his clubs and belaboured the other so badly that both died. Then the spirit of the moon-man, *Alinda*, said to the spirit of the parrot-fish, *Dirima*:

'You are to become a parrot-fish and live in the sea, and when you die, you'll never come to life again, but I am going to be the moon in the sky, and although I'll die like the rest of you, I'll only be dead for three days, then I'll live again.'

So, from that time onwards, the parrot-fish and the whole of creation, once dead, never again came to life. But although, each month, the moon becomes thinner and thinner until he finally dies, after three days he again shows as a silver streak which grows progressively larger until it reaches its full size.

The aborigines brought me the empty shell of the pearly nautilus (*Nautilus pompilius*) which they said was the skeleton of the dead moon. Pl. 151.

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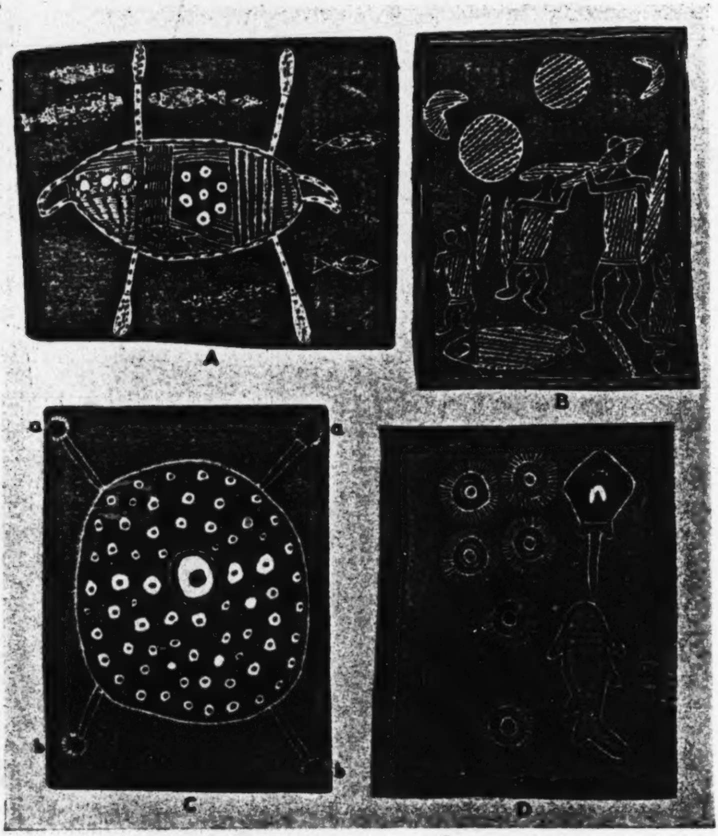

PLATE 155. Bark paintings, astronomical, Yirrkalla and Oenpelli

A Orion and the Pleiades B The Moon-man
C Walagugu and the Tjirupun D The Southern Cross and the Pointers

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

Warner[14] has a variant of this myth, in which it is the parrot-fish who decides that, when he dies, he will remain dead. The aborigines contend that the parrot-fish was a 'silly fool'. 532* 773* 821

Plate 155B illustrates the legend of the moon-man, *Alinda*, and the parrot-fish man, *Dirima*. In the centre are the two opponents belabouring each other with clubs; on the lower left is the dead parrot-fish with his weapon lying beside him, and on the lower right, the dead moon. The parrot-fish is depicted on the lower left, and the moon, in its various phases, near the upper edge.

The Moon, Nalimbu

The aborigines believe that in the early days of the world the moon, *Nalimbu*, was a man who spent much of his time collecting a yam-like plant, *waralki*. His sister, a dugong-woman, *Balwokman*, who lived in and around the swamps near by, collected *rakia*, the spike-rush, for food. One day the dugong-woman was searching for *rakia* when she inadvertently walked through some itch weed which, once her skin became dry, set up an intense irritation. She tried many remedies, but without success, until in sheer desperation she dived into the sea. Finding that water stopped the itching, she said to the moon-man:

'I'm going to change myself into a dugong, and stay in the sea forever.'

'If you do,' said the moon, 'I'll live always in the sky.'

So, true to his word, *Nalimbu* left the earth, taking the yams, *waralki*, with him.

One day, as the dugong was sleeping on the surface of the water, two pandanus-tree men, *Gurun-gurun*, decided to kill her for food. But just as they were about to do so a large wave breaking on the beach frightened the dugong away. The *Gurun-gurun*, in disgust, transformed themselves into pandanus trees.

Since then the moon has lived in the sky, the dugong in the ocean, and the pandanus tree on the edge of the sea and the watercourses.

At the same time, associated in some way not ascertained with the moon and the dugong, there was a man, *Guripun*, who with his young wife was collecting *rakia*. They were tying it up in bundles when the string broke, scattering the *rakia* everywhere. That *rakia* now grows in many of the swamps of Arnhem Land. Disgusted by their misfortune, the couple went into the sky and became the stars Arcturus (Alpha Bootes) and Saak (Eta Bootes). When the star Arcturus appears in the eastern sky the aborigines know that the *rakia* is mature and ready to collect.

Connected with the myth of the moon, *Nalimbu*, is a belief, similar to that held by the Groote Eylandters,[15] of an association between the moon and the tides. When the moon is new or full, and sets respectively at sunset or sunrise, [171] [823]

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[14] Warner (1937), p. 523. There are several other myths of Arnhem Land that explain the origin of death: the moon-man, *Alinda*, p. 193; the native-cat, *Barama*, p. 257; and the myth recorded by Berndt (1948a), pp. 16-30, which bears some resemblance to that of *Nalimbu*, the moon-man, p. 105. In the Berndt version, belonging to the *jiritja* moiety, however, it is the dugong which brings death to the world. [114]

[15] See Groote Eylandt myth, p. 161.

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*773 the tides are high. When the moon is in the zenith at sunrise or sunset, the
821 tides are low. The aborigines, noting these facts, believe that the high tides
823 running into the full and new moon make it fat and round. When the tides
are low the water pours into the sea beneath and the moon becomes thin.

Plate 156D illustrates the myth of the moon, the dugong, the man, *Guripan*, and his wife. The moon, *Nalimba*, is the central semicircle. Above, the three torpedo-shaped figures are the yams, *waralki*, which he took into the sky with him. The stars on either side of the moon represent the man *Guripan* and his wife, whose misfortune was responsible for the plentiful supply of *takia*.

On the right of the lower panel is the dugong-woman, *Balwokman*, and on the left the footmarks of the pandanus-tree men, *Gurun-gurun*. The cross-hatching in the lower panel symbolizes the large wave breaking on the beach, frightening the dugong just as the pandanus-tree men were about to spear it.

Plate 156C deals with the same myth, but with less detail. Again the torpedo-like designs are the yams, *waralki*, taken into the sky by *Nalimba*. The moon, as a crescent in the first quarter, is called *moilboui*, and as a disc, lower left, is *bauwik*. The cross-hatched ring, which is regarded as the wet-weather camp of the moon, represents the halo commonly seen round the moon during misty weather.

The Southern Cross and Pointers, Balüng

*532 The Southern Cross and Pointers are looked upon as a stingray (the Cross)
*773 being eternally pursued round the southern sky by a shark (the Pointers). The
myth is associated with Caledon Bay.

821 In Pl. 155D the four upper stars in the painting (the Southern Cross) represent a stingray, and the two lower stars (the Pointers) a shark, which is chasing the stingray. These creatures are shown to the right. The wide difference
[648] between the myths of the Southern Cross at Yirrkalla and Groote Eylandt[16]
[174] — less than one hundred and twenty miles apart — indicates a minimum of social
contacts between the two tribes.

The Milky Way, Milinwia

In creation times the Milky Way, *milinwia*, was a watercourse near Blue Mud Bay.

At that time two brothers, *Nungumiri*, the elder, and *Jikawana*, the younger, went fishing in a bark canoe. When near Woodah Island[17] they caught a rock cod, *guruka*, and were on their long homeward journey when a heavy storm sprang up. A large wave fell aboard, badly straining the frail bark canoe and filling it with water. The next wave, breaking the canoe in halves, left the brothers struggling in the sea. For many hours the two brothers swam towards the distant mainland. Then the arms of the younger brother became so swollen — he had forgotten to remove his arm-bands — that he finally collapsed and was

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[16] Groote Eylandt myth, p. 185. [17] Map, Fig. 1.

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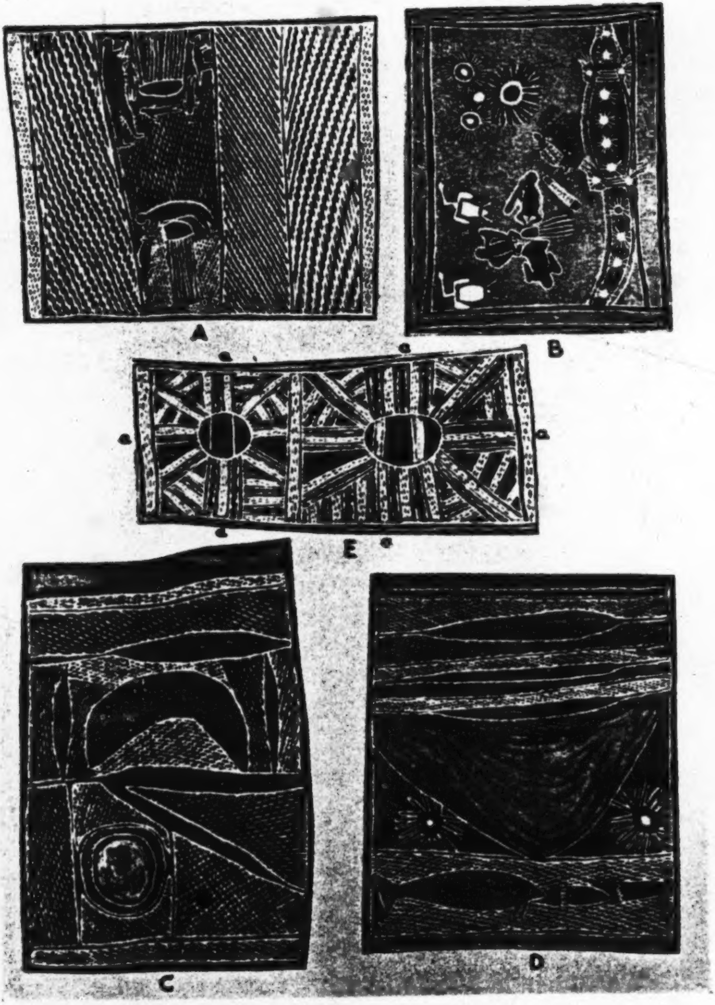

PLATE 156. Bark paintings, astronomical, Yirrkalla

A The Magellan Clouds B The crocodile, the opossum and the ibis-men
C, D The Moon-man E The Sun-woman

*532 *773 821 drowned. The elder brother kept swimming until he reached a low rock near the shore of the northern end of Blue Mud Bay. But his limbs were so stiff and he was so exhausted by his long swim that he could not reach the shore. Later, their bodies were found on a pebbly beach at the northern end of Blue Mud Bay. When the ants saw what had happened they travelled in long lines to the bodies and bit them all over, hoping to bring them to life,[18] but were unsuccessful. The record of this mishap, which formed the basis for two aboriginal bark paintings, can be seen in and around the Milky Way.

Plate 157C deals with the terrestrial story of the two brothers, and 157A with the celestial.

In Pl. 157C the two brothers, in their canoe, are shown in the upper left-hand panel, with the rock cod they captured immediately below them. At *a* is the elder brother, *Nungumiri*; at *b*, the younger brother, *Jikawana*; and panel *c*, the pebbly beach on which the dead men were found. The central panel, *d*, represents the watercourse at Blue Mud Bay, now the Milky Way. The parallel and the wavy lines, *e*, indicate the wake of the fish, and *f*, that of the canoe. The parallel transverse lines to the right of the elder brother, *a*, and to the left of the younger, *b*, are the ants travelling to the dead bodies to try and bring them to life. Other vertical lines of black and white dots are ants travelling to the right armpit of the younger brother, *b*, and the left hand of the elder, *a*, respectively. The younger brother is wearing the arm-bands which caused his death.

The two brothers, the fish and the canoe are dark starless spaces in the Milky Way, in the region of Scorpio. The wake of the fish, the canoe, the pebbly beach and the ants are either small stars or nebulae in or adjacent to the Milky Way.

Plate 157A, the celestial story, shows the brothers in the sky, the younger on the left. The rock on which the elder brother landed is the black mark immediately below him. The central panel tells the story of the tragic canoe journey. To the left are the brothers in the canoe, and in the centre the swamped canoe with the brothers struggling in the water. The men and the canoe have all become celestial features. The two men are dark patches in the Milky Way, the younger within the constellation of Serpens, the elder near Sagittarius. The rock on which the elder brother landed is a portion of the Milky Way, near Theta Serpens, and the canoe, a line of four small stars near Antares. The meandering lines which form the upper and lower panels, representing the wake of the fish and the canoe, are luminous portions of the Milky Way, near Scorpio, while the stars in the central panel are either included in or adjacent to the Milky Way.

Orion and the Pleiades

At Yirrkalla, the constellation of Orion is believed to be a canoe full of *jiritja* men, called the *Tjirilpan*, with their wives, the Pleiades, in another canoe.

[789 825] [18] The bites of ants are often used by the aboriginal magicians to restore their victims to life. See Warner (1937), p. 204.

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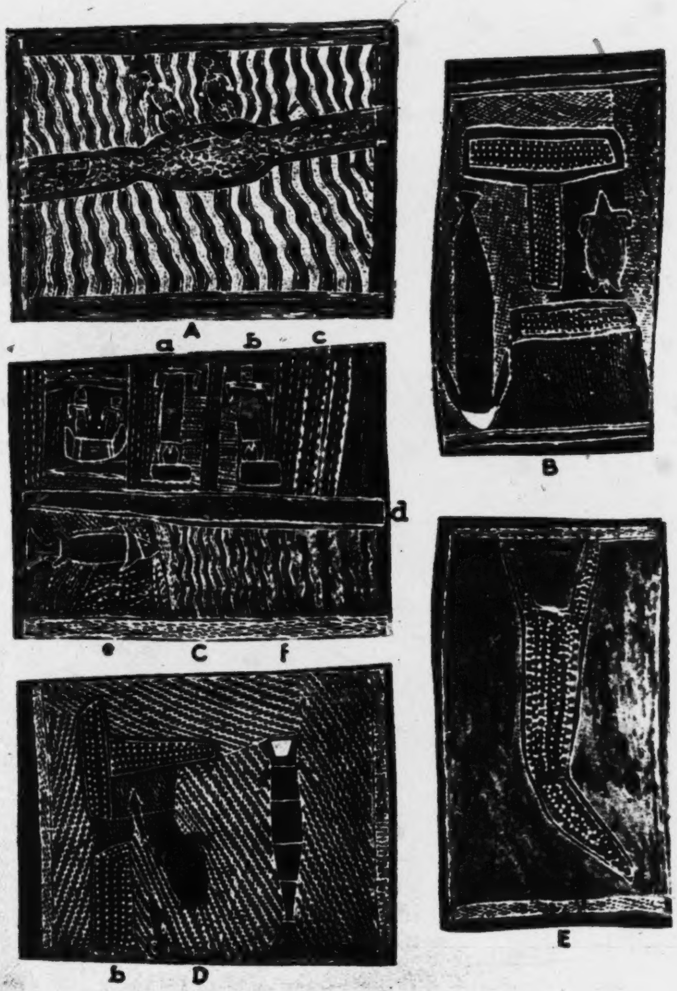

Plate 157. Bark paintings, astronomical, Yirrkalla

A, C The Milky Way B, D Orion and the Pleiades E The Scorpion

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These men and their wives, who came from a land far away to the east, paddled towards the north-eastern shores of Arnhem Land. The men succeeded in catching a turtle and the women two large fish, *kouper*, which they loaded into their respective canoes.

When the *Tjirilpan* and their wives were nearing Cape Arnhem a heavy storm swamped both canoes and drowned all the people. The two canoes, the men, the women, the turtle, the two fish they had caught and a whale, *morokundja*,[19] from Cape Arnhem, are now in the sky, where they can be seen throughout the whole of the wet season. The men are the constellation of Orion, the women the Pleiades; the fish, the turtle and the whale are nearby unidentified parts of the Milky Way. The turtle, the fish and the whale are also large rocks in the sea near Cape Arnhem.

Plate 157B is a companion painting of the constellation of Orion and the Pleiades in which the whale and turtle are shown, but not the fish, *kouper*.

In Pl. 157D the T-shaped design (the constellation of Orion) is the canoe of the men, *Tjirilpan*, and the dots the men in the canoe; *b*, the rectangle below it, is the canoe of the wives of the *Tjirilpan*, the dots representing the women and the stars the two fish, *kouper*, and a turtle. The long design on the right is a whale, *morokundja*, from Cape Arnhem.[20] The cross-hatched areas to the left represent the waves which swamped the canoe, and that to the right, the wake of the whale.

The Scorpion

The aboriginal constellation of the scorpion is contained in the constellation of Lupus, the wolf. Lupus is situated near the tail of the European constellation of Scorpio.

Plate 157E illustrates the aboriginal star group of the scorpion in Lupus. The dots inside the main design, which is a highly conventionalized form of a scorpion, indicate the smaller stars within the main constellation.

The Magellan Clouds

The Magellan Clouds are believed to be the homes of two sisters, each of whom has a dog. The elder sister, *Nujai*, with her dog, *widji-git*, lives in the greater Magellan Cloud; the younger sister, *Narai*, with her dog, *gurai-gurai*, in the lesser Magellan Cloud. During the middle of the dry season the elder sister, *Nujai*, leaves the younger because at one time *Narai* went into the bush to defecate, but instead gave birth to three children. During the wet season, however, the younger sister persuades *Nujai* to return so that they can go out together gathering yams.[21]

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[19] Almost certainly the hump-backed whale (*Megaptera australis*) which frequents these waters.

[20] Bark painting of whale, Pl. 100D.

[21] At Yirrkalla, only the lesser Magellan Cloud is visible in the evening sky during most of the dry season (April to September). Both 'clouds' can be seen during the 'wet'. This accounts for the belief that the elder sister leaves the younger during the dry season.

ASTRONOMY

532* 773* 821 Plate 156A represents the Magellan Clouds and the southern sky. In the lower portion of the central panel is the older sister, *Nujai*, with her dog, *widjigit*. The oval figure is the fire and the parallel lines are the burning logs. In the upper part of the painting are the younger sister, *Narai*, her dog, *gurai-gurai*, and her three children. The symbols of *Narai's* fire have the same meaning as those of her sister's fire.

The two women, their dogs and *Narai's* three children are stars adjacent to the Magellan Clouds, and the fires, two bright stars near by, possibly Canopus and Achernar. No explanation was given for the cross-hatched areas on either side of the central panel.

The Crocodile, the Opossum and the Ibis-men

There are two aboriginal constellations in Scorpio, the crocodile-man, *Ingalpir*, and the opossum and the ibis-men.

The constellation of the crocodile includes all the stars of Scorpio from 'the sting', i.e. Lambda and Upsilon Scorpio, to the third magnitude star, Sigma Scorpio, next but one to Antares. In the opossum and ibis constellation, Antares is the opossum-man and the two smaller stars, one on either side of Antares, Tau Scorpio and Rho Scorpio, the ibis-men. A small unidentified star near by is the camp-fire round which the three men are seated, the opossum-man blowing his wooden drone tube and the two ibis-men beating their sticks and singing.

When, in early December, the opossum and ibis constellation and the head of the crocodile constellation first showed in the morning sky, the aborigines knew that they would soon see the praus of the Malay traders who came each year, prior to their expulsion by Commonwealth law, to collect fish and trepang. [439] The Malay traders left their own country in late November on the north-easterly winds and returned in April on the south-easterlies. The crocodile is associated in a minor way with the making of fire.

Plate 156B shows both the constellation of the crocodile and the opossum and the ibis-men. It also shows, in a rather interesting manner, the creatures themselves. In the constellation on the right of the painting the crocodile and its related stars are grouped in one design. The other constellation is differently presented. In the upper left-hand corner are four stars. The large one on the right, Antares, is the opossum-man; the two stars on the left are the ibis-men and the central white dot is the fire around which the three men are seated. On the left of the crocodile's tail, the three men are again shown seated around their fire. The opossum-man, the darker colour, is blowing his wooden trumpet; the ibis-men are beating their music sticks together and singing. These creatures are drawn for yet a third time. Near the hind leg of the crocodile is the opossum with his wooden trumpet, the nearby long rectangle. On the left-hand edge of the painting, in white, are the two birds.

The Sun-woman, Walo

*532 *773 821 The sun-woman, *Walo*,[22] lives at Turinjina, a place far away beyond the eastern horizon. She has one daughter, *Bara-bararinja*, whose father is the mythical man *Djunkgao* (p. 270).

When the sun-woman[23] starts on her daily journey across the sky, her daughter wants to accompany her, but the mother always refuses her, because the heat of two suns in the sky would be so great that it would scorch the hair of the aborigines and might even set the country on fire. So, every morning, according to the Yirrkalla aborigines, *Walo* rises out of the sea over Cape Arnhem and with a ceremonial digging stick in each hand (similar to those used by her husband, *Djunkgao*, and his sister, *Madalait*, Pl. 134C, D) walks across the sky until she reaches Biminura, which is far away to the west.[24] As soon as *Walo* disappears beneath the western horizon she changes herself into a wallaby and, entering a long underground tunnel, hops quickly back to Turinjina so that she will be in time to start on her journey next morning. When the sun-woman sets or rises, the intense heat of her body causes the horizon and the clouds to become incandescent.

In the right-hand panel of Pl. 156E the sun-woman is rising from her camp at Turinjina, and in the left she is setting at Biminura.

The radiating lines in both panels represent the rays of the sun breaking through the clouds at sunrise or sunset, and the transverse and vertical lines, *a, a, a, a*, the light reflected from the crests of the waves as they break on the shore.[25] The two bars across the sun indicate the red feathered string ornaments given to her by *Djunkgao*, which she always wears round her waist and forehead when she is in the sky.

CONCLUSIONS

*773 821 171 Although the bark paintings and the related myths of the astronomy of the aborigines of Arnhem Land give us but a glimpse of the rich star lore of those people, their analysis has revealed several points of interest: the importance of the moon and the relative unimportance of the sun; the similarity of the beliefs surrounding the Milky Way, the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades, and the Magellan Clouds; the wide variation in the myths concerning the Southern

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[22] Berndt (1952), p. 46, states that the place of *Djanggawul* (*Djunkgao*) is the sun's place. He also records that the sun-woman had two daughters, *Barinanga* (almost certainly my *Bara-bararinja*), who used to accompany her across the sky. But she finally sent them back, because the heat from three suns was too great for the aborigines. Waterman (1953), in a personal communication, stated that some of the Yirrkalla aborigines believe there are two suns in the sky at the same time, a man and his wife.

[23] Berndt (1952), p. 82, refers to a *dua* moiety sun-woman, rising out of the sea and walking across the sky with a *mauwulan rangga* (ceremonial digging stick) in each hand.

[24] The Yirrkalla aborigines consider that Biminura is near Milingimbi. Berndt (1952), p. 139, records a song in which the *Djunkgao* sisters saw the sun setting behind Milingimbi.

[25] When *Djunkgao* was at Bilapinja Island he noted the sunrise and the light on the breaking waves. These were the subject of a song, p. 271.

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Cross; and the probable existence of a simple calendar, based on the movements of the heavenly bodies. 821

The myth of the moon as a man appears to be both universal and the most important in aboriginal astronomy. 171

At Groote Eylandt, *the moon did no more than abduct a woman and her* children as companions, p. 481; but on the mainland of Arnhem Land there are several myths which tell of how the moon brought death to the world, whilst he himself is eternally reincarnated, p. 493, p. 488, p. 495. Spencer and Gillen[26] record a similar myth from the Aranda tribe of Central Australia. This belief, however, is not universal, for Parker[27] states that, in the Euahlayi tribe of western New South Wales, the moon brings the children to the woman, and Mountford[28] was told by the natives of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia that the moon was once a man who, having been coaxed into the sky by his sister's sons, had been unable to return.

The Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla myths which link the waxing and waning [623] of the moon with the tides are of interest. On the other hand, the sun, who is a woman, takes a minor place in aboriginal mythology. Spencer and Gillen[29] describe a sun ceremony. There are also Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla myths of the sun, p. 481, p. 502.

Throughout the aboriginal star myths the stars in the constellation of Orion are regarded as a man or men and those of the Pleiades as a group of women. In Arnhem Land, p. 482, p. 493, p. 498, in the Wheelman tribe of Western Australia,[30] and among the aborigines of northern South Australia,[31] the Pleiades are wives and daughters of the men of Orion. In western Central Australia, the women of the Pleiades are always being pursued by the man of Orion,[32] and in Victoria[33] the Pleiades are a group of young women singing a tune, to which the men of Orion are dancing.

The myths associated with the Milky Way are usually, but not always, similar to each other. In Arnhem Land, p. 479, p. 487, p. 496, the Milky Way is a water course from which the sky people gather food. Macgraith[34] found that the Central Australian aborigines believe the Milky Way is a river which divides the sky people into two adjacent tribes. Parker[35] states that the Euahlayi tribe of New South Wales looked upon the Milky Way as a watercourse, and Howitt[36] mentions a similar belief among the aborigines of Queensland, New South Wales and northern South Australia. Smyth,[37] however, describes the Milky Way as the body of two enormous snakes which made the River Murray. The body of the snakes, however, may be a sky river.

The Magellan Clouds are always camps of sky people. At Groote Eylandt, p. 481, they are the camps of an old man and woman, and at Yirrkalla, p. 500,

[26] Spencer and Gillen (1899), p. 564.
[27] Parker (1905), p. 50.
[28] Mountford (1937), field notes.
[29] Spencer and Gillen (1899), p. 549.
[30] Hassell (1934), p. 237.
[31] Mountford (1939), p. 105.
[32] Mountford (1940), p. 155.
[33] Smyth (1878), p. 434.
[34] Macgraith (1932), p. 19.
[35] Parker (1905), p. 95.
[36] Howitt (1904), p. 432.
[37] Smyth (1878), p. 434.

171 those of two sisters. Among the Aranda[38] the Magellan Clouds are the camps of *773 the two evil men of whom the aborigines are afraid, but further west among the desert tribes the clouds are the camps of two spirits, one of which is a good and 821 one an evil spirit.[39] In western New South Wales, a mother and a daughter live in the Magellan Clouds.[40]

In contrast to the widespread and similar myths of the moon, the Milky Way, the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades and of the Magellan Clouds, those belonging to the Southern Cross vary widely. At Groote Eylandt, p. 485, the stars of the Southern Cross are two fishermen and their cooking fires; at Yirrkalla, p. 496, a shark (the Pointers) chasing a stingray (the Cross) around the sky; and at Oenpelli, p. 487, a family of star-people. In western Central Australia, the Cross is the track of an eagle,[41] and in western New South Wales it is an eagle in the sky[42]

From the limited data collected on Arnhem Land astronomy, one can see in it the beginnings of a calendar, the arrival of the stars and their positions at sunrise or sunset denoting the time for certain happenings. Thus, at Groote Eylandt, p. 94, the wet season stops and the south-easterly winds start to blow when the constellation of Scorpio reaches a certain position in the evening sky; at Yirrkalla, the showing of Scorpio in the morning sky was a sign that the Malay fishermen would soon arrive to collect trepang, and when Arcturus is [805] visible at sunrise the spike-rush, *rakia*, is ready for harvesting. There is little doubt that fuller investigation would show that the aborigines have evolved a workable calendar based on the movements of the heavenly bodies.

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[38] Spencer and Gillen (1899), p. 566.

[39] Mountford (1948), p. 156.

[40] Parker (1905), p. 97.

[41] Mountford (1940), field notes.

[42] Parker (1905), p. 97.

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